

The Saturday Review

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EDITORIAL NOTICE:—The Editor cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. He must also decline to enter into correspondence with writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged.... It is preferred that MSS. should be typewritten.

NOTES OF THE WEEK

"Greed, ambition, and lust of power" are the motives rightly ascribed by *The Times* to the railway men who have leaped at the throat of the nation. Without entangling ourselves in the figures—always a fruitless attempt—the civil war is partly a question of a few more shillings a week to an overpaid class, and partly a question of seizing the Government. Between the panther-spring of Germany upon an unprepared Europe and the declaration of war without a day's warning by the National Railway Union, the difference is in favour of Germany. Both are appeals to brute force; but the Germans applied their brute force to foreign nations; the railwaymen are applying it to their own countrymen. The Germans tried to hack their way to world-domination through the bodies of Belgians, Frenchmen, and Britons. Mr. Thomas and his men are trying to climb into power on the starved and frozen bodies of the men, women and children of Britain.

Civil war, the most terrible calamity that can befall a nation, is happily infrequent, and has hitherto broken out for some great and dignified cause, however mistaken. The civil war in the seventeenth century between Charles I and the people was partly sectarian and partly political. It was a struggle between episcopacy as embodied in the Church of Laud and presbyterianism as represented by the various sects; and it was also a fight for a kingship controlled by Parliament. The civil war in 1861 between the Northern and Southern States of America was fought on the issue of State rights and slavery. These were great and worthy causes. But this war is a sordid squabble over wages, blown up to white heat by a handful of British Bolsheviks. It is the squalor, the humiliation, the indignity of the business, the degradation before the rest of the world, that must wring the heart of every man who loves his country.

How the Germans will chuckle, and rub their hands! What Tirpitz and his submarines, and Ludendorff and his battalions, failed to do, is to be accomplished by one Thomas and half a million railway porters and engine drivers! The detested and arrogant Briton is really within measurable distance of financial ruin and starvation, and at the hands of a trade union!

Mr. Morgenthau, American Ambassador at Constantinople during the war, has given us his observations on the present state of Germany. According to his judgment, German power, military and manufacturing, has been left practically "intact" by the war. Germany has retreated from the devastated countries of her enemies to her own undamaged Fatherland, where she is preparing to renew her commerce, and refurbish her arms, while the rest of the world is dissolving in anarchy.

This strikes us as an overcoloured estimate of Germany's undoubted potentiality of recovery. It is true that in one respect Germany has suffered less than France and Belgium—her territory has not been ravaged by barbarians, and her mines and factories have not been destroyed. But Mr. Morgenthau forgets or overlooks the loss of something like six million men in the prime of life, and the disablement of as many more; the huge debt and indemnities and the loss of the coal and iron fields. It is, of course, possible that Germany may tear up the Versailles Treaty and defy her powerless enemies. She may, and probably will do so: but not yet; not yet. The boys must grow up to provide fresh cannon-fodder: we doubt whether any of the men who have fought in this war will again take the field.

It must be remembered that Mr. Morgenthau (a very able and a most amiable man who was extremely helpful to the English in Constantinople), is by birth a German Jew, and by naturalisation an American citizen. He is therefore likely to be obsessed by two ideas, the one hereditary, and the other acquired. In his boyhood and by his parents Mr. Morgenthau must have been painfully impressed by the power of Prussian militarism. In manhood and from the country of his adoption he may conceivably have formed an exaggerated opinion of the power and virtue of the United States. Certain it is that to-day Mr. Morgenthau regards Germany and America as the two States that hold in their hands the destiny of the world. And he looks on America as called upon to save mankind from Germany. Allowing for what we have assumed as Mr. Morgenthau's mental predisposition there is no doubt some truth in what he says about Germany's power. But he is, in our opinion, deceived if he depends on the United States to save Europe.

The emotional Celt is unequally matched in battle against the cool and accurate Scot, as Mr. J. H. Thomas has found to his cost. Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Robert Horne have fairly beaten him at every turn of the negotiations, and exposed his inconsistencies and contradictions. Mr. Thomas has been driven to employ the feminine weapons of tears and recriminations. He denounces both Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Robert Horne as interfering between the railwaymen and his sympathetic, sweetly reasonable countryman, Mr. Lloyd George. Politicians must have read with a smile that "the Prime Minister is not master in his own house." Mr. Lloyd George is master, and frequently an ungrateful and capricious master, in his own house. But, all the same, the instinct of Mr. Thomas is right, for it is by no means certain that if Mr. Lloyd George had been left to himself, he would not have given in to the N.U.R. Indeed, seeing that "the anarchist conspiracy" is largely the result of Limehouse campaigns and the election speeches of 1918, we think it probable he would have yielded. But the Scotsmen got round him, and saved the State.

Whether the Prime Minister would have given in to the N.U.R. if Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Robert Horne had not been there to screw his courage to the sticking point is one of those things round which conjecture must continue to range, as the truth can never be known. There is, on the one hand, the Prime Minister's well-known fondness for "settling," as lawyers call it. On the other hand, there is the notorious fact that the affection of Mr. Lloyd George for Mr. Thomas is not quite that of David for Jonathan. Indeed, evil tongues go so far as to swear that if there is one person in the world whom Mr. Lloyd George dislikes it is Mr. Thomas. However that may be, two great results already emerge from the strike. (1) That the country is no longer at the mercy of its Thomases, Smillies and Cramps. (2) That Mr. Lloyd George is bound to the Conservative or at all events Non-Labour Party.

All the trouble is really traceable to the Trades Disputes Act of 1906, that infamous measure, the handiwork mainly of Lord Loreburn. The Trades Disputes Act is really the Magna Charta of anarchy, for it places the trade unions above and beyond the law of contract and of tort. But for that Act the National Union of Railwaymen would have been liable, like any other Corporation, for the breaches of contract by its members. Judgment could have been obtained against the Union, and its strike funds would have been attached to satisfy the judgment. As things stand, it is doubtful whether any illegal act has been committed by the Union or its members.

It is true that during the war the Government, under the powers of "Dora," obtained an injunction to restrain the bank from paying money to the strikers in South Wales. But that was because the strike interfered with the conduct of the war, and imperilled its success. Now that the war is over, these particular powers in the Defence of the Realm Act have lapsed, and the resources of Government in its struggle with the enemies of Society really lie in the help of the rest of the community. There is no law which compels any man to hew coal or to drive an engine, if he doesn't choose to do so. The problem—and it is really one of the most difficult and urgent that confront us—is this: When the men who hew coal, drive engines, unload ships, or produce electric power, combine in such numbers as to paralyse the national life, ought there not to be some law (held in reserve, of course), to compel them to work, or go to prison?

That is one of the questions which Parliament may be called on to answer, if the strike goes far enough. Even if the strike should collapse suddenly, the legislature ought to make provision against a repetition of so terrible a danger. The Government were fully prepared for a strike, as is shown by the perfection of their arrangements, which reflect the greatest credit on Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Robert Horne. But some

day the Government may be caught napping, and then a large number of helpless people would be starved, and others ruined. A civilised country (if England can any longer be so described) ought not to live in such a state of insecurity. It may be that this strike will so arouse public opinion that the Government will be able to introduce protective legislation.

In that case the strike will have done good. Another good effect will be its conclusive disproof of the assertion made by the Nationalisers that strikes would not occur when the State was substituted for the private owner. The railways have since the war been under the management of the State, and we see the result. This strike is the "knock-out blow" to the fast-failing reputation as economists of Messrs. S. Webb, R. Tawney, Chiozza Money, and Mr. Justice Sankey, who are at last exposed as the dupes or accomplices of Messrs. Smillie and Hodges. Since the Prime Minister has described the strike as "an anarchist conspiracy," we hope Messrs. Tawney, Webb and the whole body of Fabians are proud of their *protégés*.

For the first time in our life we sympathise with Mr. Smillie. He did play so very hard for the place of Arch-Anarchist! No device was left untried to secure for himself the centre of the stage, with the snap-shotters at work, and the limelight on! He puffed endless cigarettes in the face of the Judge at the Royal Commission table; he hectored dukes; and declared to a trembling herd of landlords that no man could own land. And now, at the eleventh hour, without warning, by "some trick not worth an egg," to be hustled out of focus by a light, hysterical Welshman! It really is bitter, especially as everybody knows that Mr. Thomas is not really "a Red," like Messrs. Smillie, Cramp and Williams.

In the sea of troubles which now rages round us it is necessary to shorten sail, or (to exchange a nautical for a financial metaphor), we must cut foreign liabilities. This is no time for crusades against Russian Bolshevism, even though we may believe that Bolshevist Russia is slowly but surely falling into the maw of Germany. Our first and last and all absorbing duty is to deal faithfully with our own Bolsheviks at home. It is therefore satisfactory to learn that the evacuation of Archangel has been successfully completed, and if any British officers and soldiers remain in Russia they are there as volunteers and soldiers of fortune. This is rather a blow to Mr. Churchill's policy, but events have been too strong for him, as they have been for all our statesmen, including the Prime Minister.

Is it not just possible that Trade Union leaders, Cabinet Ministers, and able Editors are all on the wrong tack in making a fetish of Standardisation? This blessed word means simply converting the maximum into the minimum wage, and tying everybody down to the same job and the same money. Is it so certain that this is what the rising generation of workmen desire? It is beginning, we fancy, to dawn on the intelligent young artisan that this system of standardisation will crush out all individual genius and energy, and prevent a man from ever rising above the dead level or ever making "a bit" for himself. The fondness of all Britons for gambling and adventure is as strong as ever, and must rebel against the despotism of the standard wage. A revolution in favour of "piece-work" would indeed sweep away Trade Union agitators and Fabian philosophers. And it may come.

Will anyone tell us; what is the use of the female constable? We have seen many comely lasses clothed in uniforms well suited to display what the late Mr. Smollett, M.P., called "their pectoral, abdominal, and fundamental attractions": but what are they to do? The policeman is the embodiment of the physical force of society: he is there to protect persons and property. He must catch (sometimes after a murderous struggle) burglars at night: and by day he has to "move on"

quarrelsome or prowling males. In the days of the suffragette riots we might have been treated to a Battle of the Amazons. But nowadays these police-women are worse than useless, for in a row they would be the first to claim, not to give, protection.

We love D'Annunzio, poet and novelist, for seizing on Fiume, appointing his own Chief of the Staff, and declaring war on Jugo-Slavia, that trunk without a head, a vague abstraction invented by the pedants of Paris. Italy has always been the most prolific mother of buoyant and aggressive personalities. Benvenuto Cellini, Cosmo and Lorenzo de Medici, Casanova, Garibaldi, D'Annunzio—these gay and irresponsible heroes of life are a joy to think about and to look upon when compared with the drab and decorous mediocrities of northern climes. Disraeli, by the bye, quite the most striking individual in English history, was Jew filtered through the Latin strain, the family having lived in Spain and Venice, before coming to these islands. Individuality is, of course, abhorred by Fabians and State Socialists and Trade Unionists.

Has no one compared the Stewards of the Jockey Club to Nero fiddling whilst Rome was burning? We are not a great reader of newspapers, but we feel sure that some Fleet Street classicist must have pointed his moral with this original and recondite parallel. Though neither Lord Lonsdale, nor Lord Durham, nor Lord Penrhyn is the least like Nero, we must admit that they have shown a tactless want of consideration for the outer world in trying to go on with the Newmarket Meeting. They have also made themselves ridiculous, which is the greatest of crimes. For it is as if they said, "What strike? Is there a strike? It's the first we've heard of it." And then to have their knuckles rapped by a Government without a single Minister who knows the odds against the favourite for the Cambridgeshire, is humiliating. Let us hope that the strike will be over by the dates of the Cambridgeshire and the Cesarewitch.

In his very entertaining book, 'Echoes, Old and New,' Mr. Ralph Nevill notes that from about 1890 to the outbreak of the Great War there was a considerable diffusion of luxury in this country. "In all probability," he writes, "the life of the wealthy during the first decade of the twentieth century was on the whole as full of pleasure and enjoyment as that led by the old French *noblesse*—without doubt it was more luxurious and more comfortable, the only thing lacking being the perfect taste and very refined surroundings which the eighteenth century understood so well. Even in this direction, however, not a few millionaires contrived, by employing highly gifted and artistic workmen, to achieve a certain amount of success." All this is true, and the shaft of sarcasm speeds home on the plume of politeness. But the new rich of the pre-war world were not half so vulgar and offensive as the war profiteers.

When Mr. Ralph Nevill goes on to say that the restaurant habit has "raised the standard of feminine dress," we feel obliged, diffidently but decidedly, to contradict so recognised an authority. Our observation is that the standard of feminine dress has been lowered. The women at the top of social things—we will not insult them by calling them "ladies," great or little—seem to our inexperienced eyes to dress down to the chorus-girls instead of making the chorus-girls dress up to them. If the women at the top were to wear high bodies, long sleeves, and long skirts, and rigorously eschew all jewellery, it would be left to chorus and shop-girls and housemaids to outrage our senses by their necks and necklaces, rings on red fingers, and such legs! When that fact was clearly perceived by the "young ladies," feminine dress would soon revert to its pristine standard of grace and decency.

Sir Edward Cook, who died suddenly in his 63rd year, was not only a gentle, generous journalist, but a rarely accomplished man of letters, with a keen interest in Art. His editorship of Ruskin and his later essays were valuable contributions to our literature. His *Life of Delane* was not inspired by the same personal affection as Mr. Arthur Dacent's, but it had naturally a greater knowledge of the editorial craft. Sir Edward Cook's career is a sad illustration of the baneful uncertainty of tenure that haunts an editor, however able. Cook was editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Westminster Gazette*, and *The Daily News*; and each time this gifted and honest man was turned out of his chair by a change in the proprietorship. It is difficult to see how this insecurity can be prevented: but it certainly tends to destroy the dignity and independence of journalism.

As we go to press, it looks as if the railway strike was coming to a close, with a victory for the Government. Owing to the beautiful autumnal weather we imagine that a great many young men and women enjoyed themselves in a kind of picnic scramble. But the people who have "the time of their lives" during a strike are the Trade Union secretaries and presidents. Some of them are fetched up from the provinces in reserved carriages: all are rushed about London in motors; and as they dash up to 10, Downing Street they are received by a small crowd. They dismount, and are begged to wait a minute on the Prime Minister's doorstep while they are snapshotted. Their pictures are in all the papers; their lightest words are reported verbatim. Nearly a century ago old Lord Eldon said, "If I had to begin life again, d—n me, I'd be an agitator." Of all the motives to public mischief the strongest is personal vanity.

Of all the impudent attempts to interfere with liberty of thought and action, the protest of the Machine Managers on the Northcliffe press against the attitude of its papers to the strike is the most intolerable. Printers are paid to set up the copy that is brought to them. They have no more to do with the subjects or their treatment than any typist has to do with the substance of the letters placed before him or her for typing. We heartily applaud Lord Northcliffe's spirited reply that he would rather close down all his papers than submit to this absurd and insolent dictation. The world is indeed topsy-turvy when nobody will do what he is told unless the order happens to square with his own ideas. That the Trade Unions should bully and tyrannise over their own members by sham ballots is bad enough. That they should assume the function of controlling the Press is laughable.

Association football has already begun, and various grounds have increased or improved their accommodation to hold the huge crowds they expect. Unfortunately, this form of football, as played by professionals, is unworthy of English ideals of sport, though the most popular in the country. Trickery and gross unfairness are to be seen everywhere, and the crowd hoots or mobs the referee when he gives a decision against the local side. There is no justification, however, for local pride, since players are bought and sold from all over the country. The Football Association and the Press are both responsible for the state into which the game has fallen. We do not write at random: we attended a few years ago a Final Tie match for the Cup at the Crystal Palace, and noted the occasions on which the referee had to intervene. He blew his whistle on an average once every three minutes, and this was afterwards described as "an exceptionally clean game." Perhaps it was, since "the muddled oafs at the goal" did not hold one another round the neck, or lie down and pretend to be hurt, when a goal was about to be scored against them.

GREAT GEDDES!

INSTEAD of saying Great Scott! (the meaning or origin of which we have never discovered) we must in future adopt into our language of admiration the words, Great Geddes! For assuredly the new Minister of Transport has more than justified the Prime Minister's selection and his previous reputation. We are now able, as never before, to conceive the impayable services Sir Eric Geddes rendered the nation during the war in organising the railway and transport services in France and Flanders. Sir Eric, though born in India, is of course a Scotsman, and had a varied experience of railway management in India and the United States before he was appointed to the superintendence of the North Eastern Railway in this country. He has met the great railway strike with the cool courage that is only engendered by a perfect mastery of the subject matter. His preparations were, of course, matured, but they were none the less wonderful. The arrangements for the distribution of milk and petrol from Hyde Park, with closed gates, and for the running of a really remarkable number of trains, deserve the praise and gratitude of the community. But Sir Eric Geddes, with all his energy and brains, would have been powerless without the extraordinary amount of help he has received from volunteers in the outside world.

We need not now inquire too closely where all these volunteers come from, and how it happens that there are such large numbers of apparently unemployed men, eager to step into the shoes of engine-drivers, firemen, signalmen, and porters. Presumably the majority are demobilised soldiers who have not yet found their places in civil life. It is lucky for us that the strike occurred when all these soldiers were crossing the stage, so to speak, and before they had been absorbed by the regular industries. The point, however, is, not that there are so many volunteers, but that they have been found capable of taking the place, at a few hours' notice, of men whom we have been in the habit of regarding as highly skilled, and therefore indispensable. It appears that in railway work, as in most other callings, *il n'y a pas d'homme nécessaire*. The great strike has uncovered another of the frauds of organised labour. In the second year of the war the employment of millions of women, taken from domestic and other luxurious trades, and placed in factories and workshops, proved that much of what the Unions called skilled labour was, in fact, work which could be learned in a very short time by anybody of average strength and intelligence. The railway strike has shown us that there are plenty of outsiders willing and capable of supplanting the "indispensable" strikers. It is really not much more difficult to drive a railway engine than a motor car; or the difference is so slight that it may be overcome in a few days' training. It is more dangerous, of course, but that is another matter; railway servants have no monopoly of courage. And the danger, such as it is, arises from the points and the signals. The trains run by amateurs have taken such a long time for their journeys, chiefly because they had to stop at every station and adjust the points for themselves. The pointsmen and signalmen are really the only men who deserve to be classed as skilled. Luckily, during the war, a great many men learned signalling; and as for the points and levers, a few days' practice ought to be sufficient to learn that job. As for stokers, porters, and guards, there are millions of men capable of supplanting the strikers. This discovery of the vast potential resources of Britain in workers may, we earnestly trust, have a decisive effect on the treatment of those who have followed Mr. J. H. Thomas in his attempt to strike a deadly blow at the heart of the nation. The one thing that really put an end to "the unrest" in the police forces throughout the country was Sir Nevile Macready's firmness in refusing to reinstate the strikers.

We shall not infringe Lord Fisher's patent by saying "Sack the lot." No Government can contemplate with equanimity the sacking of 500,000 men. But we may at least insist that the men who have stepped into the breach in the hour of danger shall not be turned out by

returning, even if repentant, strikers. The Government have given a public pledge that those workers who remain at their posts shall not only be protected from violence or intimidation at present, but that they shall not be injured in their future position. In other words, that if the Unions should be so ill-advised as to expel the loyalists from their bodies, and forfeit their past subscriptions to death and sick funds, etc., the Government will make it up to them. That, indeed, is the least the public can do for those who have stood by it in the hour of need. They are more numerous, the loyalists, than was at first deemed possible; for the trains are being run partly by loyalists, partly by pensioners, and partly by new volunteers. Every hour that passes shows that Society is stronger than was calculated, and that the Unions are weaker. If this strike should enable the nation to break the bonds of a degrading tyranny, that was fast crushing all individual initiative and exposing Britain to renewed attacks by foreign enemies, the benefit will have been cheaply bought by a few days' anxiety and inconvenience.

Messrs. Thomas and Cramp "forgot that fellow Geddes," when they called their strike. They expected to find a Government on its knees before them, begging them to spare a starving people. To their astonishment, they found everything prepared and organised as carefully as it might be against an invading enemy. Volunteers, supplanters, strike-breakers, blacklegs, seemed to spring instantaneously from the ground: from every street and suburb they began to pour towards the offices opened for registration of employees. The shock to the feelings of Cramp and Thomas must have been terrible. For not only had they missed their spring, and victory had become impossible, but they saw every chance of the members of their Union losing their places. So much depends on a right calculation of the enemy's forces!

HOME AND BEAUTY AT THE PLAYHOUSE.

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM has never been at any pains to conceal his contempt for the British theatre. He first sprang into fame as the author of some half-dozen plays, which were all produced at about the same time, and had all the air of having been deliberately designed by a clever comedian for the amusement of silly people. Everyone knows that Mr. Maugham can do better than his plays. He proves it again and again in his novels. Moreover, Mr. Maugham is known to some of the more intelligent of our playgoers as the author of a rather bitter comedy entitled 'The Man of Honour,' which only the Stage Society could be persuaded to produce. In this comedy he looked at a not uncommon situation in life with a wary eye, and told what he conceived to be the truth about it. His man of honour, in defiance of good sense, married a girl who was about to bear him a child, with the result that a bad business rapidly became worse, as, in this case, was only to be expected. In 'The Man of Honour,' Mr. Maugham bravely tackled the question, perhaps one of the most difficult of all problems in conduct, whether we are justified in doing good that evil may come. Mr. Maugham had an idea, and he worked it out, fearless of the result upon people, who in their theatre are accustomed to ask no questions, and seldom to hear anything but lies. That play remains to this day as a proof that Mr. Maugham has a light which in self-defence he is well content to hide under a bushel. It showed that he was not by nature inclined to be either sentimental or disingenuous or superficial. In a word, it showed that he was not by nature in the least cut out for a successful playwright.

Incidentally, it also showed that Mr. Maugham had a knack of writing for the theatre. "Time was that when the brains were out the man would die," says Macbeth. It is a saying which does not apply to the modern dramatist. Mr. Maugham, we believe, was in some six London theatres at once when first he

came upon the town, and in none of them did he suffer it to be known that he was by nature a man of rather rare intelligence. We should long ago have concluded that his 'Man of Honour' was in the nature of an accident, were it not that Mr. Maugham periodically writes novels as well as plays, and that in the novels we find precisely the rather sardonic comedian introduced to us some years ago by the Stage Society. We can only assume that in his ordinary plays Mr. Maugham takes as much trouble to express other people's commonplace as he takes in his novels to express his original self.

Nature, of course, is difficult to suppress entirely. There are often to be seen intruding into Mr. Maugham's most successful comedies streaks of the natural man. Sometimes our merely successful dramatist palpably nods, and we half expect him in a minute to create a panic in the theatre by talking in his sleep and saying something uncomfortably true and discerning. But invariably he pulls himself together in time, and we are soon reassured to find his characters talking after Wilde and conducting themselves after Pinero, and otherwise behaving according to plan. And then it is our turn to be nodding.

In his latest play Mr. Maugham has given way to nature rather more than usual, especially in his theme. 'Home and Beauty' is clearly the work of a satirical rogue. Unfortunately, this satirical rogue has tried to lighten his play with humours of so elementary a character (and incidentally of so doubtful a taste) that those who are most likely to be pleased with the way in which he cuts his mutton are least likely to be pleased with the way he cuts the capers to it.

His heroine is a peevish and exacting wife, of the kind who is usually adored by her husband in proportion as she contrives to make his life a burden. She loses, or think she loses, her first husband in the war, and marries a second. Suddenly the first husband reappears, and we soon infer that each of them is only too willing to renounce his rights in favour of the other. The key of the composition is inevitably farce, and the first act is excellent farce. In the later acts Mr. Maugham sinks the satirical comedian in the popular entertainer; and, being out of his element in the rather fantastic and boisterous medium he has chosen, lapses continually, both in the quality and taste of his jesting. The play grows continually less interesting, and finally leaves us to make the best of housework and burnt steak as material for fun of the most obvious kind and the poorest merit.

Mr. Maugham has tried to do two inconsistent things. He has tried to bring the natural satirist to terms with the successful playwright. In most of his successes he hides the satirist well out of view, and keeps his work conventional at all cost. Plays like 'Lady Frederick' or 'Cæsar's Wife' are hardly more than clever conventional exercises upon a common theme. Mr. Maugham remains imperturbably outside them. There are no dangerous intrusions of the rather saturnine, disillusioned and unorthodox personality we find in the novels. His native wit keeps him from making sheer nonsense of any theme he may undertake; but usually in his plays Mr. Maugham's observation of people and things plays a purely negative and cautionary part. It keeps him from making a fool of himself even to please the public; but it does not tempt him to insist upon unpopular truths or to go to the root of his matter. 'Home and Beauty,' on the other hand, shows us Mr. Maugham allowing his natural genius a rather more positive rôle. He has allowed it to dictate his theme, and largely to determine the manner in which he deals with it. At the same time, he introduces popular incidents and some very popular fun, to please his audience, and partly to cover his tracks. The result is that he has spoiled a satire without winning anything very substantial in the way of general applause. To the English public a satirist is very like the devil himself, and in 'Home and Beauty' they are able plainly to detect his cloven hoof.

The acting is extremely poor, when we consider that the cast represents virtually the best talent available for the purpose. Miss Jean Codell gives a competent

performance of a part in which the author's taste (never a very strong point with Mr. Maugham) is at its worst. The rest of the company tempt us to regard our popular English players as divided into two classes. There is the class which exploits its personality, and the class which exploits its person.

RECOLLECTIONS CONCERNING JOHN FLAXMAN, R.A.

[Supposed to be supplied in a letter to the Revd. Henry Cary, of the British Museum.*]

Timber Hill,
Norwich.

January 18th, 1827.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—

In thanking you for your kind and hospitable reception last Tuesday se'n night, I have great pleasure in sending you, as desired, the poor particulars I can recollect of my meetings with the late distinguished Mr. Flaxman. If you will obligingly communicate the enclosed to my fellow-guests, Mr. C. Lamb and his amiable sister, you will add another to the many favours already conferred on me by yourself.

It was at No. 27, Rathbone Place, the residence of Mrs. Mathew the Bluestocking and the eloquent divine her husband, that I first met the Sculptor. The occasion was one of those Réunions, as the word was, at once learned and genteel, at which it was their habit to assemble all that was either new or venerable in the world of art and letters, as your friend and admired colleague at the Museum, Mr. J. T. Smith, will very well remember, since he attended them frequently while working at Mr. Nollekens' Studio. Mrs. Carter was often there, the friend of the late revered Dr. Johnson, and the great Mrs. Montagu; and on the occasion of my first meeting Mr. Flaxman there was also a queer, half-formed young man of retiring manners, one Blake, who sang his own poems to his own tunes. Mrs. Mathew, if my memory plays me not false, persuaded her husband to bear the expense of printing them, but they did not take—nor, in truth, did they deserve to do so.

But I digress. About 10 o'clock, on the night in question, when "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" were at their height, there entered a young man much about this Blake's age, but somewhat deformed, with a pair of large eyes and a high forehead, much like the late Mr. Warren Hastings, as I remember him at his trial. His voice was low and clear, and he looked about him, somewhat ill at ease. But he could answer courteously enough, and it was clear that Mr. and Mrs. Mathew thought much of him. He followed the readings from the Classics, which were our regale for the evening, with singular intentness. Mr. Mathew had found him, when but 10 years old, trying to teach himself Latin, and when I saw those elegant folios of his, illustrating Homer, Hesiod, and Æschylus—(these last, by the way, engraved by that very Blake whom I saw that same evening, now, I believe, a poor disordered lunatic)—I recalled, not without emotion, those hours in Rathbone Place and the varying fortunes of these two men, then alike poor and obscure.

Mrs. Mathew further told me that Mr. Flaxman had made various attempts in oils (one of which was of late, I am told, sold as a Domenichino) and designed for the late Mr. Wedgwood, whose classical and elegant ware owes much to the talents of his young modeller, though he did call him a most supreme coxcomb.

Mr. Flaxman was about thirty when he went to Italy with his wife, a pretty Quaker-like woman, whom I was to see again in their house near Fitzroy Square. To a man of his parts I conceive Rome, as I remember her, before Bonaparte robbed her of so much, to be the thing to be desired to make one wise, if I may use the expression, dear Sir, without profanity, to one of your cloth; and it was none the worse for him that he went to work as well as to see the sights. He copied

* Translator of Dante and Assistant Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum.

vases, restored statues, and studied the etchings of the illustrious Piranesi. Meeting with patrons wise enough to appreciate him, his designs from the Greek, like his Dante, of which you, my dear Sir, are so good a judge, were all commissions from the Great; he won the commendation of Canova himself.

I met Mr. Flaxman again in the Spring of 1796, two years after his return, and had the pleasure to see in his studio the model, which I believe Sir John Soane hath acquired for his house† in Lincoln's Inn Fields, for that notable group in honour of Lord Mansfield, now in its place in Westminster Abbey. I was amazed to find it so large a work, since it had seemed to me that Mr. Flaxman's talents lay in little, in the *basso-relievo*, the cameo, the frieze on a Wedgwood urn. I found, my dear Sir, that he was able to rival Banks himself, or Wilton, in the art of massing colossal marble figures to produce an effect. They talk of a St. Michael overcoming Satan, now doing for Lord Egremont, as a vastly fine piece, also in the grand manner; but for my part I thank Mr. Flaxman most in that he did so much to procure for the public those great marbles of Lord Elgin's, which we have had for but a small part of what they cost him, as I understand. Mr. Flaxman likewise saved the Marbles from being restored, in which he agreed, it is said, with Canova. I am perhaps singular in my feelings, but I can rarely see with patience the botchings of the modern sculptor applied to the works of the ancients; and if Mr. Towneley's Marbles have a fault, it is this (if I may venture to say so to one who plays so important a part in the great Institution to which they belong).

Sir Joshua, it is said, told Mr. Flaxman that his marriage had ruined him as an artist. Never was this less the case; though it so often happens that a man loses his individuality in the happiness of the returned affection of a noble-minded woman. Relieved from the importunities of common visitors, and the distressing cares of house-keeping, the sculptor was able henceforth to devote himself to his art; and those who like myself, have heard him in his Academy Lectures dilate on the beauty and grace of ancient poetry and genius will think little of the great Reynolds' discernment, though they may be disposed to rate more highly Mr. Fuseli's jest that the Lectures were "the sermons of the Rev. John Flaxman."

I saw Mr. Flaxman once again, when that splendid masterpiece of his, the Shield of Achilles, was shown by Messrs. Rundell and Bridge. Of its quality as a work of art you, my dear Sir, are a better judge; but I was so deeply impressed by its merits that I intruded myself, unasked, upon his privacy. Within his little house all was serene, all was quiet, as if the fair shapes of his fancy had taken up their abode with him. Mrs. Flaxman, too, though now aged, received me with the same air of calm propriety as I had seen in her in earlier years, and her affection for her husband, and interest in all his doings, were as pleasing as ever. My visit was of necessity brief, and I promised myself the honour of repeating it; but circumstances took me from town for some years, and I was to see him no more. On December 14th last, on arrival from Norfolk, I found myself at his door, only to learn that but a week had passed since he followed his beloved wife to the tomb. One of his men was there, busied in packing some of the works in his late master's studio, and the honest fellow spoke sorrowfully of him as "the best master God ever made." He told me, too, a singular story. On the Saturday before his death, a stranger came to bring him a gift from an Italian author, dedicated "to the shade of Flaxman" (*all ombra di Flaxman*), the rumour being widely received abroad that he was dead. The Sculptor noted the dedication with a smile, but next day, attending church as usual, he experienced a chill, and was forced to retire to his chamber. Four days later he was dead.

These, my dear Sir, are the poor memories of the gentle-souled Mr. Flaxman that an old man has been able to call up; if they are of service to you, or to Mr. Lamb or his engaging sister, in enabling you and them

and, indeed, others to form a clearer vision of that blessed spirit, I shall be more than satisfied.

Believe me, dear and reverend Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

PETER MANCROFT.

The Rev. Henry Cary, D.D.,
Bloomsbury, London.

WHEN BACHELORS WERE TAXED.

THE modern world has revived the tax on bachelors.

True, so far as England is concerned, it only takes, as yet, the differential form of a wide extension of the King's Bounty to married men with children. But in the chaos of After-the-War finance a definite impost may be laid on the shoulders of the unmarried at any moment; and amid the general scream of burden-bearers their plaintive cries would not be heard. The exigencies of war justified many extreme measures. The exigencies of what, for distinction rather than contrast, is called peace, will doubtless be held to justify anything. But even should we come to it, the bachelor tax would not be entirely an innovation for the twentieth-century State. America began to differentiate between married and single in the matter of taxation some years before the war. Only bachelors with upwards of £600 a year, however, were concerned in that levy—the real sting of the tax being felt to reside in the fact that their married brethren were exempt altogether from income-tax duty until they reached the £800 a year level. The Grand Duchy of Oldenburg also increased the burden of income-tax on single men in 1912, stooping even to afflict the man who had as little as £80 a year. The dread spectre may therefore be said to have assumed a threatening attitude some time previous to the events which began in 1914; and what has happened since and is happening now has certainly not diminished the possibility of the bachelor tax taking a solid and menacing shape nearer home. Already, as we have seen, a practical differentiation is shown in the matter of the rebate to fathers. In the next Budget the bachelor may be called upon to make a direct contribution to the State in coin, if he will not make it in children. Some comfort may, consequently, be obtained from a consideration of the manner in which this penalty was imposed in past ages. The worst that the single man of our own day has to fear is a money fine. But the old world had more stringent laws.

In both ancient Rome and Greece the bachelor was marked out for special indignities. The object of these anti-bachelor laws was, of course, to encourage citizens to bring up children for the State—in other words, to maintain its military efficiency. These disabilities were often of so humiliating a character that men chose matrimony as the lesser evil. In Sparta the bachelor was liable to be branded and labelled, made a slave or menial servant, and forced on stated occasions to march out into the desolate parts of the city chanting a dirge descriptive of his unhappy condition. All young men over a certain age who remained unmarried were also prohibited from watching maidens at play or disporting themselves in the water. The bachelor was cut off from many social liberties enjoyed by others, and, as far as possible, segregated with his kind.

Not only bachelors, but spinsters as well, were looked upon unfavourably in Rome under the Cæsars. All unmarried men between the ages of 25 and 60 were mulcted in a special contribution to the State, while single women were debarred from receiving legacies. So desirous, in fact, was the Roman Empire to foster the institution of marriage and the rearing of large families, that the disabilities were extended to widows, and even to the fathers of a small progeny. All sires of less than three children were forbidden any share in the spoils of war; and under the legacy law a widow, up to fifty years of age, was compelled to marry on pain of forfeiting any estates her late husband might have bequeathed her. Bachelors of both sexes were estopped from attending certain social functions, and in countless ways were relegated to an inferior scale of citizenship.

† Now the inhospitable and untidily arranged Soane Museum.

In Persia, according to Herodotus, bachelordom was frowned on and marriage made as attractive as possible to all classes. Men, rich and poor, chose wives in the marriage markets which were set up in every big city—the wealthy paying large sums for the beauties who were exposed for sale, and the “workers” selecting brides from among what was left. As these, naturally, were not the fairest of their kind, the thoughtful rulers of the realm granted them a dowry, to compensate for their lack of charm, out of the proceeds of selling the prettier damsels to the rich. If any citizen thus dowered with a wife fell out with her afterwards, and desired to turn “bachelor” again, he was obliged to surrender the fortune intact.

The bachelor-tax, in some form or another, is, in fact, very ancient history. But some examples of it were introduced in England as lately as the 17th and 18th centuries. According to an Act of 1695, every person (except such as received alms) who, on reaching the age of 25, was still a bachelor, was ordered to pay a tax, ranging from 1s. to £12 10s., for five years. Widowers were also penalised to the same amount. It should be mentioned, however, that the imposts were but part of a larger scheme of taxation drawn up for the purpose of carrying on the war with France, and were not the product of any particular animus against the unmarried citizen. The poor bachelor was let off cheaply, and even the celibate of higher degree was not considered to have been harshly dealt with. Similar taxes were imposed a century later. Included in these was a duty on the servants of bachelors. In 1798 the first rebate to married men with children was introduced.

Shortly after the Battle of Waterloo, the bachelor was again pointed out as being a legitimate source of revenue, and the misogynists of the period got a terrible shock. Happily for them, the anti-bachelor campaign left nothing more damaging behind it than a piece of doggerel in which the bachelor is held up to public ridicule and sold off at an auction. It begins thus:—

“It seemed that a law had been recently made
That a tax on old bachelors’ pates should be laid;
And in order to make them more willing to marry,
The tax was as large as a man could well carry.
The bachelors grumbled and said ’twas no use,
’Twas horrid injustice and frightful abuse—
And declared that to save their hearts’ blood from
spilling,

Of such a vile tax they would not pay a shilling.”
The tax (in the rhyme) was resisted by bachelors of every rank, until at last the authorities in desperation seized hold of them, and put them up for sale at public auction. The narrative concludes:—

“In short, at a highly extravagant price,
The bachelors all were sold off in a trice.
And forty old maidens, some younger, some older,
Each lugged an old bachelor home on her
shoulder.”

The most drastic anti-bachelor movement that is likely to be started a century after Waterloo will not, it is hoped, result in so startling a sequel as is here depicted.

VOTES AND CASH.

IT is now proposed that M.P.’s, who already receive a salary from the State, shall also be paid certain sums for their travelling expenses. In these days of gloomy finance, economists should view this extension of tribute with apprehension. From various reasons—love of publicity, love of interfering, love of social advancement—there is no lack of candidates.

If Mr. Wishy will not stand, Mr. Washy hastens to the poll in his place. Mr. Taper and Mr. Tadpole vie with each other for a good political chance. In such circumstances, this additional burden to the public purse seems absurd. But there is one body of men who will welcome the gift, and absorb it. That body is the Syndicate of Sound Supporters, which exists in every party, and in every constituency.

This syndicate exploits the candidate. A really satisfactory candidate comes with a big cheque-book and a determination to win. Any sum which the candidate receives—and a good deal more—goes into the hands of the sound supporters. Some of them are not individually corrupt; but they are out for conquest, and to keep the seat. Certain individuals wish to be J.P.’s: all of them wish to be important and politically busy. The candidate, in their eyes, can only have one unforgivable sin; that sin is what they call meanness. Political meanness means insufficient subscriptions.

The pass-book of a budding politician is like the catalogue of the Zoo. The Fox, the Hare, the Cat, the Dog, the Buff Orpington, and even the Roach and the Dace appear in his list. The Ancient Order of Buffaloes, “whose poise held menace to a lesser beast,” must not be omitted.

Methods and theories of corruption are best understood in small towns which have been parliamentary boroughs. Here the old view that political influence is a negotiable commodity still holds good. These are the kind of places where a new candidate receives a message from a leading citizen, that the way to his heart is through his ledger. Here we have sale and barter as time-honoured as the Bishop’s Palace or the Martyrs’ Memorial. The candidate has to take a sympathetic line with every class; from the Dean and cathedral windows, to football clubs, cricket clubs, political clubs, fat stock shows, Free Foresters, Free Masons, and Guy Fawkes bonfires. Large sums are not expected. What is liked is a free-handed gentleman who is not afraid to show the colour of his money. The wise candidate draws cheques by stealth and blushes to find himself an honourable member. With regard to two matters of hospitality he is careful indeed. He asks no one to dinner, and he gives away no pheasants; for in either case those who are left out would surely vote against him.

A wise candidate came down not long ago to a scattered country constituency. He drove a four-in-hand, glittering with affluence, to every small town. Champagne at the hotels was called for, and many bottles were found to be corked; and many more were opened. The intelligent electors drank the so-called corked wine. Here was an antidote to meanness, and a worthy supporter of the good old cause. He was an astute example of the “compleat” corrupter. His descent on the countryside was like a shower of gold. The counsel of the wise, and the valour of the brave, were of no avail against his cash-box. He was at the top of the poll, and is now ascending to the Peerage.

Among these small towns was one indeed fortunate. It is situate in the district which includes that great parliamentary fiction, the Chiltern Hundreds. Here there were three candidates. One was an opulent banker from Lombard Street. Another a financier with a European reputation for bullion. The third was the representative of a Ducal house. One elector was heard saying to another that they expected a very “interesting” election. Human nature still remains the same. Subvention to Members of Parliament will surely be annexed by the syndicate in waiting.

As a matter of fact, it would be better to make any further payment in kind rather than in cash. Payments in money whet the appetites of electors, and should be avoided. Members, by the kitchen arrangements of the House of Commons, now receive a luncheon below cost price and a subsidised dinner. A further subsidy might take the form of young grouse, or fat geese, or well advertised whisky. To those who do not dine, material benefits, such as perambulators, or Coronas, might be acceptable.

Candidates should welcome any legislation which curbs the inordinate desires of their political friends. Between the dates of elections, local busybodies, aspiring tradesmen, town councillors seeking after notoriety, are attending to their own little affairs. But when a dissolution is in the air they are gathered together after their prey. The member who has not sufficiently given way to the cormorants to whose goodwill he owes his seat, becomes conscious of doubts as to his chances at the poll. Often he becomes conscious also that

some opulent stranger has been obliquely approached by sections of his constituency. Faults are found with the votes he has given. The measures which he has supported are derided. The policies which he has at heart are stated to be unsatisfactory to local requirements. These murmurings and discontents are in fact not genuine. The grumblers—and in their ranks is sometimes found the election agent himself—care for no exact political doctrine. The time for loaves and fishes is at hand. The owner of the fattest cheque-book is duly selected; and if the records of democracy be examined, he often succeeds.

It would be much to the advantage of English life if gentlefolks and substantial men of business would supersede the small wire-puller and the greedy cliques. We saw the other day framed in a country hotel, the bills paid to the landlord a hundred years ago by the ancestor of a neighbouring magnate. Beer, ribbon favours, post horses, reminded one of Hogarth's pictures of elections. The spirit of these days is still with us; and the fault lies not so much with candidates as with the obscure and avaricious, who seek a valuable consideration for their support. The introduction of convicts and pigs to Ecuador nearly exterminated some valuable products. The supply of respectable candidates should be jealously preserved in this country.

SECRET REMEDIES.

MELMANISM has been the subject of our correspondence and comment in our columns on more than one occasion, and if we revert to it again, we do so neither to repeat nor to emphasise the arguments with which our readers are now familiar, but rather as a peg on which to hang a moral. For Pelmanism, whatever may be its value as a system of memory or mind-training, is of interest for another reason of wider scope and deeper import. Whatever else it may be, Pelmanism is a symptom. The costly whole-page advertisements which daily meet our eyes are a proof that there exist a great host of men and women who, even in these times of high taxation and inflated prices, are willing to part with several guineas for a course of mind-training. And they pay blindfold, with no assurance, except the prejudiced statements of those interested in the sale, or their hired celebrities, that they will get their money's worth.

It is true that sometimes we buy books without first seeing them, though we prefer to borrow; but when we do buy, it is generally because the author's reputation, or our acquaintance with his other works, justifies some rashness. No man would buy a set of golf clubs, nor would any woman, we imagine, buy a hat, on the mere strength of an advertisement. Before they pay their money, people very naturally want to know what they will get. Yet, undoubtedly, great numbers of men and women succumb, not, perhaps, without a struggle, to the seductive appeals of these much advertised secret remedies. How much greater then must be the number of those restrained by prudence!

It is often said that good advertising creates a demand, but this statement needs qualifying. No advertising, however skilful, could create a demand for hair-dye among bald-headed men, or gramophones among the deaf. All that advertising does is to transmute a passing wish into a fixed, effectual desire. Most men, at some time or another, have wished that they could caricature or play the fiddle, make a good speech or perform the three-card trick. But the wish is fleeting; other matters press more closely. Then comes advertisement in the insistent modern style and recalls the fleeting thought, again and yet again, until one day in a moment of weakness we write a cheque.

It is useless to call spirits from the vasty deep, if there are no spirits there; so the huge financial success of Pelmanism reveals the fact that many people are uncomfortably conscious of their mental shortcomings; though anxious to improve themselves, they have a distaste for severe or prolonged effort; their power of concentration is weakened by disuse; their memory is less retentive than of old; their mind less permeable by new

ideas—in short, their brains are growing rusty. It is to people such as these that Pelmanism and other secret remedies make appeal. They claim, by means of twenty minutes' gentle exercise daily, to change the possessor of a fat and flabby mind into a mental Hercules. It is all so simple and so easy. Students like it; children cry for it; and people who have never tried it say how good it is.

It must be a feeling of sheer helplessness, such as drives a sick man to quack remedies when doctors fail, that tempts so many people to risk their money; and the companies that sell a course of mental exercises are able to charge enormous fees, because those whose business it is to teach have left this field untilled. Professional teachers seem to think that education stops at the age of seventeen, or, at the latest, twenty-four. Unfortunately, among average men, this is but too true. Some time between these ages comes cramming for a competitive examination; then follows training for a profession with more examinations interspersed. Memory becomes all-important, and mind-training ceases; with the great majority it ceases for ever, while the specialisation demanded by most professions stunts and narrows the intellect. Some few, however, and these not usually the most successful—for the rising man is far too busy to be aware of his deficiencies—discover in later years that there are other interesting things besides those by which they earn a living. They try, perhaps, to study them, but only to discover that a mind long held in bondage to one absorbing subject moves with difficulty in wider spheres. They feel the need of mental Swedish exercises to make them supple. Books on the psychology of education are legion, and by devoting much time to the study of them a man might devise a scheme of training suited to his needs; but those with the greatest need are least qualified to do so, and in despair they try quack remedies.

It is strange that no recognised authority on education, so far as we are aware, has done for the grown man and woman what is being done so extensively and well for the growing child. There is no Montessori method for the middle-aged. No expert advises them, no one whose opinion carries weight has provided for their needs. Whether Pelmanism and kindred systems have effected any good we do not profess to know; but this at least their advertisements have done—they have demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt that great numbers of men and women would gladly welcome an authoritative work on mental training, if written in untechnical language and sold at a popular price, and it is to be hoped that some recognised authority in the educational world will respond to the demand.

TO FIELD MARSHAL LORD ALLENBY.

(Horace, Odes I vi.)

Another tongue in epic flights
Will sing the deeds by sea and land
Of warriors under your command,
My hero of a hundred fights.

Achilles' unrelenting ire,
Odysseus' shifts from sea to sea,
Yourself, and fierce Pelopidæ
Are all beyond my simple lyre.

Not mine with poor civilian quill
So glorious a theme to shame,
For fear your military fame
Should suffer from my want of skill.

Who claims Mars' adamantine shirt
Fits to tell, or Ajax made
Match of the Gods by Pallas' aid
And Merion black with Trojan dirt?

My trifling Muse as usual sings
Of feasts and fights with finger-nails
By maidens keen against the males,
And leisurely philanderings.

CORRESPONDENCE

LORD FRENCH AND MR. ASQUITH.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The reader of Lord French's preface to his new edition of "1914" is in some peril of forgetting what it was that Lord French set out to prove, in his first edition, as to his dealings with the Home Government. At times, indeed, the aim of the preface seems to be, not to reply to controversialists, but to show how many eminent persons thought Lord French a good general and a nice man. We readily concede that, within limits, and with lapses, he was both; but candour compels us to add that he is a poor dialectician, and that his habit of reeling off testimonials to his own qualities recalls a quack advertising a patent food, rather than a Field-Marshal or a Viceroy.

We forbear to criticise the new edition as a military record, beyond saying that it leaves unexplained most of the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of his original narrative. We noted some of these in a previous review, and were interested to find our estimate of them confirmed by the leading British military historian. The Hon. John Fortescue, writing in the *Observer*, said that if any book on the Napoleonic wars had contained so many mistakes and inaccuracies as Lord French's first 80 pages, it would very properly have been thrown in the waste-paper basket, and every single statement in it regarded with scepticism. True, Lord French now charges Mr. Fortescue with misquoting the text of his book—a charge which would have carried more weight if Lord French had specified the misquotations. Let them settle this point between them. Meanwhile, we remain persuaded that Lord French's misstatements must have been grave and numerous, to draw so severe a condemnation from so judicial an authority.

We are, however, concerned not with the book, but primarily with its purpose. The preface is intended to corroborate Lord French's original charges against the Home Government. These charges were (1) failure to produce high explosive shell, and (2) undue interference by Lord Kitchener with Lord French's operations in the field. The first charge relates, not to inevitable, but to avoidable, failure: to failure caused by callous sloth, indifference and deafness to Lord French's appeals. Mr. Asquith has replied to this charge, and the preface contains, so far as we can judge, not a syllable in answer to that reply. Lord French does indeed state that when Lord Kitchener wrote to Mr. Asquith, that Lord French had assured him that he had "as much ammunition as he could use for the next forward movement," Lord Kitchener was either lying, or had forgotten the facts. If this were true, it would not follow that Mr. Asquith, because misled by Lord Kitchener, was callous or slothful; nor could the Prime Minister be expected, when he received these explicit assurances from Lord Kitchener, to reply, "Are you sure you are telling me the truth?" or even to say to Lord French, "Are you sure that Lord Kitchener is telling the truth?" But is Lord French's version true? There is really no means of determining, beyond the credibility, as witnesses, of Lord Kitchener and Lord French respectively. It will not do, with the *Daily Mail*, gratuitously to assume that Lord Kitchener's statement was false, and Lord French's true: nor, with *The Times*, that Lord Kitchener's memory was faulty and Lord French's irreproachable. It is one man's statement against another's, and we fear Lord French's lapses of memory in his military memoir give little ground for confidence in his usual accuracy. Lord French advances only two pieces of corroborative evidence: first, that his diary, while recording the conversation with Kitchener, contains no reference to shells; and secondly, that in a conversation with Mr. Asquith in July, 1915, months after the material events, he denied to Mr. Asquith that shells had been referred to. As to the first, Lord French may well be as careless a diarist as he is a historian; and the second point is not relevant, unless

we assume that an allegation becomes a fact if repeated often enough to different people.

Lord French makes great play with two or three complimentary letters sent to him by Mr. Asquith. If, he says in effect, I had really contemplated a movement which would have amounted to "leaving our Allies in the lurch," how account for the tone of these letters? Yet it is simple enough. The Commander-in-Chief on one occasion, and in circumstances of exceptional strain, loses his head: he recovers it within a few hours, thanks to the visit from Lord Kitchener, and keeps it for some time after. Mr. Asquith, instead of unkindly reminding him of this lapse, assures him (in terms perhaps unnecessarily flattering) of the continued confidence of the Government. There is nothing unintelligible about this transaction, nor is there really any comparison between the circumstances in which Mr. Asquith wrote his letters to Lord French, and Lord French his famous and far more glowing letter to Mr. Asquith. For when Lord French wrote the latter, he considered Mr. Asquith guilty, not of a solitary act of misjudgment, recalled in time, but of months of sustained indifference to the sufferings of the British Army: he had been manoeuvring, by hook or crook, to drive Mr. Asquith from office: and he wrote immediately after his plot miscarried.

Lord French's statement that he altered none of his dispositions by reason of Lord Kitchener's visit suggests that he varied neither his actual nor his intended dispositions. Is this so? We strongly suspect that Lord French communicated to the Home Government certain intended movements, which were not yet actual dispositions, since they had not yet matured in orders to his troops: that Lord Kitchener was sent out to prevent them from so maturing, and that he did so.

Finally, we note Lord French's complaint that Mr. Asquith accused him, on hearsay evidence, of gross neglect of duty as an administrator. This refers to Mr. Asquith's not unnatural assumption that Lord French wrote his book when Viceroy of Ireland, an assumption which Lord French declares false. Every word, it appears, was written before he went to Ireland. The only possible inference from this is that he wrote it either when Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, or when commanding the Expeditionary Force; and that he was devoting to polemical literature time which might with profit have been dedicated to defending England or defeating Germany, as the case may be. So Mr. Asquith need only have changed the form of his indictment; its substance remains true.

YOUR REVIEWER.

P.S.—My absence from town in a remote part of the country is the reason of this belated letter.

JOHN BULL AND UNCLE SAM.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—In my recent letter to your periodical, resenting English and French criticism of America, it was not my purpose to precipitate an embittered controversy. Apparently my comment was taken with acrimonious feelings by many Englishmen, and some of the letters I received were extremely abusive. They came to me in vast numbers from all over the globe, and prove beyond peradventure my assertion that John Bull and Uncle Sam love each other like the proverbial Kilkenny cats. I am enclosing three of them that are typical. Have you the courage to publish them? I trow not.

These letters, which I have read with amusement, show an amazing ignorance of our national characteristics. Some of them contain hostile allusions to our Senate. This is natural. It is the prayer of millions of sturdy Americans that the Senate will reject *in toto* the League of Nations and the peace pact. Neither one subserve American interests, in fact are at variance with our traditions and our very form of government. Wilson in no way represents America. The last election was an evidence of the attitude of our people toward him. He has with his idealistic blunk played right into the hands of far shrewder men, and out of all the muck of the peace table England has emerged triumphant.

phant, while Uncle Sam is left with the bag to hold. No wonder those of your readers who so viciously attack our Senate are roiled. Of course I do not under-rate the beautiful altruism of England. She is working solely for "peace on earth and good will toward man," with the kindly proviso that land grabbing in no way interferes with this celestial and beatific sentiment. England has always been noted for her unselfishness. Your own poet—Rudyard Kipling—wrote a very stirring appeal in which occurs the line, "Lest we forget." Every Englishman should take that sincerely to heart, lest they forget that it was America that stepped in and saved them from becoming a German colony. Imagine what would have happened had we remained out of the war. Fritz would now be censoring your periodical, and William Hohenzollern, instead of sawing wood, would be overlord to the "vast British Dominions."

As a good American, I sincerely hope that the United States Senate will refuse to ratify the Peace Treaty, unless it is separated from the League of Nations. It is a "fraud, delusion and snare," with potentialities for mischief beyond computation. Wilson is politically too dead to skin. His abuse of every one who will not subscribe to his political tenets is fast alienating those who have been reluctant to surrender their faith in his infallibility. He should never have gone to Europe. If he had been broad enough and less self-sufficient, America would have been represented at the peace conference by constitutional lawyers who would have understood that it was a grim business they were dealing with and not Utopian dreams. I would like to know Lloyd George's real opinion of our "diplomatic" president.

Anyway, the SATURDAY REVIEW must have a large circulation, judging from the number of letters that I received. And, singular to remark, these letters proved by their venom and exuberant abuse the very contention I put forth—that is, that America and England will remain friends just so long as it is to England's financial interest to do so, and that there exists, except in isolated cases, no genuine good-will between the two nations.

There is one confession I will make, however, that will give pleasure to my critics—I voted twice for Woodrow Wilson. But I have repented in sackcloth and ashes, and like thousands of others who committed the same folly will make reparation by voting the Republican ticket in 1920, when Woodrow and his academic dreams will go to join the dodo. I was in Georgia—a strong Democratic state—a few days ago. I found there a rapidly growing sentiment against Wilson and his League of Nations, and if it is that way in Georgia, imagine what it is in the great Middle West. I would like to paraphrase the expression of Henry Watterson, the dean of American journalism, who ejaculated "To hell with the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns," by saying, with all the emphasis of which I am capable, "To hell with the League of Nations."—Respectfully,

EDWARD I. WADE.

6346, Harvard Ave., Chicago.

(Enclosure.)

Edward I. Wade, Esq.,
Oak Park, Ill.

Dear Mr. Wade,—

I have read your amusing letter of July 20th. in the SATURDAY REVIEW.

I am not an Englishman, but a Canadian born, and as we Canadians live nearer you Americans than the English, we can "size you up" better than they.

We consider you simply as a nation of vulgar braggarts (your own letter is proof of this), and as only partially civilized. You are a conglomeration of the scum of Europe, plus 10,000,000 negroes. A hundred years from now you may perhaps be allowed to rank as a civilized nation, provided you give up your bad habits, and seriously try to reform. Meanwhile, your time of trouble is at hand, with your labour difficulties (Gompers is an English Jew), your German Jews, and our negro question, and you will have quite enough

to do with your own affairs for some time to come, without interfering in matters that do not concern you.

The other nations will look on with quiet amusement to see how you come out of it all, if indeed you do come out of it.

It was notorious that your Army organization in France was incapable and inefficient (see certain debates in Congress). The only time your troops had any success was when the plans for attack were made for you by the French staff. When you attempted to go "on your own," the result was failure. I wonder if you have ever heard of a notice put up by the Australians (one Australian was worth five Americans) where their line joined yours—"Why don't you join the Australians, we feed our troops." And numbers of your men did desert. Some Australian battalions came out of the line stronger than when they went in. Americans in dead Australians' uniforms had joined them.

Your politics are the most corrupt on earth, according to statements in your own newspapers and magazines. I presume they know what they are talking about.

At present the U.S. is the most cordially hated nation on earth, not even excepting the Germans, who are merely stupid, not vulgar. The British Empire, France and Italy have only contempt for you (read the Press of those countries for proof of this).

If it pleases you to believe you won the war, even after a very late and bad start, by all means go on believing. It tickles your inordinate vanity, and hurts no one else. But how about being too proud to fight until you were kicked into it by the Germans?

Your Senate and its strutting nobodies, are the laughing stock of the world.

How do you like the picture—as others see you? Better take the beam out of your own, before you tackle the mote in the English eye.

It is certainly one point in your favour that you apparently read the SATURDAY REVIEW, as well as the Hearst "garbage gazettes."

Yours,

Montreal, September 3rd, 1919.

CANADIAN.

[This is one of the letters forwarded to us by Mr. Wade.—ED. S.R.]

ABETTING THE STRIKE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Many people must have been surprised to read in the newspapers that a mass meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen was held in the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday evening. The uses to which this building may be put are presumably defined in some document having the force of law. Is a meeting of this kind one of them? Even if the proprietors of the hall have a free hand in such matters, it is astonishing that they should consider themselves justified in making money by affording facilities to men who are engaged in an attempt to hold the community to ransom.

I see that the Bishop of Peterborough, Dr. F. T. Woods, preaching on the strike to a congregation which included more than a thousand railwaymen, expressed the opinion that "the nation as a whole must shoulder the blame when such a state of affairs was possible."

It is cant of this sort that brings ecclesiastics into contempt.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

CIVIS.

September 30th, 1919.

NATIONAL GRATITUDE.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—A strong objection to the League of Nations and the Peace Treaty is that they preclude the possibility of this country returning to its former state of "splendid isolation." It is unfortunate that our press and politicians did not evince their gratitude to France for the pardon of Dreyfus in some other way than the

promotion of the *Entente Cordiale*. If there had been no *entente*, and we had to fight Germany alone, the war would have been a purely naval affair, and in that case Germany could hardly have inflicted more injury on this country than she managed to do while it was aided and protected by the powerful fleets of France, Belgium, Portugal, and Rumania. At any rate, we should not have accumulated a debt of eight thousand millions, and lost a million of our young men. But most important of all, we should not have incurred the ill-will of any Allies, because we should not have had any allies. The feeling against us in France, the United States, and Belgium, is said to have become so bitter, that that portion of our Press which is accustomed to publish Continental Editions, Russian Supplements, American editions, and French numbers, is suggesting that we increase our heavy load of indebtedness by informing the French, Poles, Belgians, and Rumanians of what we have done for them in the way of fighting and money-spending. Even our Jewish allies are displaying unfriendliness. The blood and money expended in the conquest of Palestine are forgotten, and because the Government ignores Mr. Zangwill's suggestion that it should evict the Arab population of Palestine, and the demands of other Zionists that a considerable portion of Syria be ceded to Palestine, we are threatened with the enmity of the Jews of the entire world.

Those who assume that Poland, France, Belgium, Rumania and our other allies will cherish any deeper sense of gratitude for what we have done for them than the Russians have displayed might consider the following facts:—

Many thousands of brave Englishmen lost their lives, and a good deal of English money was spent, in helping the Dutch to cast off the Spanish yoke. Nevertheless, a half-century later, when they had become the wealthiest nation in Europe, and the most powerful at sea, they treated us so badly that we had to fight them.

We sent men and money to assist the Protestant States of Germany in their Thirty Years' War with the Catholics. Yet it is the Protestant portion of Germany, rather than the Catholic portion, which has exhibited the greater ill-will towards us.

Much British blood and money was expended in assisting Prussia in her Seven Years' War with Austria and France. But for this assistance, she would probably have been wiped off the map. Subsequently, we financed her in her fight with Napoleon, and all we got for it was her hatred.

Thousands of British lives were lost, and many millions of money expended, in protecting our American colonies from French aggression. Yet a few years after, the French danger being removed, these same colonies declared their independence, and in alliance with France waged war against us.

Many Englishmen gave their lives and money in helping the inhabitants of Greece to cast off the Turkish yoke, yet only the presence of the British Fleet prevented them from joining the Central Powers.

Sixty-five years ago, we went to war with Russia in defence of the Turks, who repaid us by taking the side of our enemies, and we expended a vast amount of blood and treasure in helping the Spanish to fight the French, while many Englishmen gave their lives in helping the Spanish American republics to gain their freedom. If these countries have not manifested their gratitude in the usual way, it is probably because they have not thus far had an opportunity of doing so.

Respectfully yours,

JOSEPH BANISTER.

40, Mazenod Avenue, Quex Road, Kilburn, N.W.6.

A MÆDÆVAL STRIKE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Like a great many of my fellow-countrymen, I have been taught to believe that the Middle Ages was a period of profound darkness, but that at length certain luminaries, who shall be nameless, began to shine in the eastern heaven, and from that time onwards the great world (England especially), bathed in such

radiance as it had never seen, went careering down the ringing grooves of change, leaping from improvement to improvement, from progress to progress, till at last, I suppose, it plunged with one wild bound into the Millennium, promised to us by the great Welsh conjurer, Ninepence-for-fourpence, of which we are all experiencing the excellent effects at the present time.

With some such thoughts as these passing through my head, I opened a life of Brunelleschi and proceeded to read the story of that epoch-making event—the construction of the great dome of the cathedral at Florence. It appears that, while the dome was being built, there was a strike, the workmen declaring that unless they received more money they would not go up to the cupola. Accordingly it was decided to dismiss them, and their place was taken by others, who, after short instruction, showed themselves quite equal to their task. The “nonplussed masters of the trowel,” as Brunelleschi dared to call the strikers, loitered about disconsolately for some time, and then sent a messenger to the great architect offering to return on his own terms. Brunelleschi kept them in suspense for several weeks and at last consented to re-engage some of them at a lower salary than before.

Who does not sigh in the complexities of modern civilisation for the simplicity of these early centuries? Who does not sometimes suspect that this word “progress,” as it is commonly used, does not necessarily connote any real improvement at all? I am not complaining of the perhaps inevitable development of things, but at any rate, if we have to put up with it, we need not allow ourselves to be duped into believing that the human race is always bettering itself, or that in the material and social world, so far as we are able to judge, there is ahead of us any state of perfection to which the whole creation moves.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

T. PERCY ARMSTRONG.

DETERMINATION TO BE SELFISH.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—That many people should believe that it is a matter of justice that Ireland should have “self-determination” is right and proper enough; but that Trade-Unionists—who are now refusing self-determination to England—should insist upon self-determination for Ireland, is to show the cloven hoof too clearly. They defend themselves by showing that their delegates assembled represent several million wage-earners. But they do not represent them, they only represent a part of them. A delegate is like a Member of Parliament: in theory the Member represents a district, in fact he only represents those who voted for him. If we deduct those who voted against him, it will be found generally that he represents little more than half the voters of the district.

So it is presumably with delegates, i.e., when there is any genuinely secret ballot. Even if this were not so, the great majority of citizens do not belong to unions—vast numbers of wage-earners even do not.

Yet Trade-Unionists tell us that a section of their body intend to use their strategic position for the forcible “imposition of their will” upon their fellow citizens, to the stultification of popular government and of the “self-determination” of England.

The Socialists too on their part are anxious that Ireland should become “self-determined,” and a glorious independent nation. Seeing that all the principal Socialist writers have argued and worked with all their force against the idea of “Nations,” one finds oneself in the presence of a contradiction. The fact is that neither the revolutionary section of the Trade-Unionists (for the moment somewhat in fashion) nor the Socialists, care in the least degree for liberty, or for national “self-determination” in the abstract. Both parties, however, desire it for Ireland, because they suppose and hope that an independent Ireland (manipulated by themselves), will be a source of difficulty and danger to the British State.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

September 19th, 1919.

E. F. B. FELL.

RATIONING FOR THE STRIKERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Has it ever occurred to the Food Controller, or to any member of the present Government, that the new rationing of food is a guarantee that the strikers shall not suffer, more than any other member of the community, from any shortage in the nation's food, which their wicked action may have brought about? Could anything be more conducive to a longer continuance of the strike? Are we even sure that these strikers are not, in some places, partakers of the "unemployment dole"?

It may be a difficult matter to deal with, when so many innocent persons are involved—even amongst the strikers—but, surely, some method might be contrived whereby the perpetrators of a crime—for this it has been shown to amount to—when punishment comes to be measured out to them, should be made to suffer more heavily at least than their victims. Surely, no one can have the slightest sympathy with them for the wanton unreasonableness of their present action, and for the fiendish cruelty with which it has been carried out. Witness the pathetic conditions in which the helpless horses, stock and poultry, travelling on the railways at the time the men were called out, have been left to their fate, without food or water. And yet when they seek to impose the same fiendish cruelty upon every member of the community—man, woman, and child—they are to have their full share of that food which they have endeavoured to wreck!

Is our Government *never* to learn any lesson from history, or even from recent past events?

Is not this but a piece of that same extraordinary ineptitude on the part of those supposed to be carrying on our wars for the national welfare and success, as was shown in the Boer War, when by taking care of the families—women and children—of the enemy, it enabled their fathers, husbands, and sons, relieved of those cares and responsibilities which have so strong an influence in inducing the cessation of war, to prolong their resistance for another year or two?

Again, was not the same ineptitude shown, when the efficiency of our naval blockade was so attenuated and relaxed in Germany's favour, that she was enabled to continue the war for at least a couple of years, resulting in an appalling loss to our own people and Allies in life and treasure, one of the effects of which is the present great disturbance and unrest in the labour world?

And now that the war is over—or is supposed to be—is it not Germany, rather than our own people, that is being supplied from our scanty stock of food and other necessities of existence?

Is it to be believed that when, as must happen, the present strikers have had enough of it, even of food, the same weak and foolish measures will be followed, to encourage the next dissatisfied group of Trade Unionists in a strike?

Before that happens may not another remedy be tried? Let Parliament repeal that last iniquitous Trade Union Act by which the funds of the wrongdoers is exempted from any liability for their wrongful acts. Let greater courage be shown in administering what powers we now have in putting down these pernicious incitements to sedition and other crimes. If these powers are not sufficient, then let Parliament strengthen them, and above all, strengthen the resolution of the Government to carry them out. Surely the Government is now strong enough, backed by the almost universal feeling of indignation which the circumstances of this strike have called forth in the country, to do, as they have the power to do, as the practical owners of the railways, to notify their employees that if they do not return to their duty within 48 hours, they will be dismissed, and their places filled up by the very numerous honest and capable men that are still unfortunate enough to be unemployed.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. S. UDAL.

Conservative Club, S.W.
29th September, 1919.

REVIEWS

THOSE VICTORIANS!

Some Diversions of a Man of Letters. By Edmund Gosse, C.B. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

IF anyone is qualified to stand forth as the champion of the Victorian Age, it is surely Mr. Edmund Gosse, its nursling and favourite child, or one of them. In times when a few slushy lines in a daily paper are more prized by publisher and bookseller than the most thoughtful and informative review, Mr. Gosse shall receive all honour at our hands, for he is a man of letters who has devoted his life to criticism rather than creation, if indeed genuine criticism be not creative: it is at least as necessary to creation as oxygen to the blood. Within our compass we can of course do no more than select a few of the topics which have diverted Mr. Gosse and his large body of readers.

Bulwer Lytton and Disraeli were contemporaries, friends, and rival novelists of great vogue in the Early Victorian period. The historical novels have always seemed to us Bulwer's best work, the 'Last of the Barons,' for instance, on which great historical erudition has been expended, with the result that we get unforgettable, if fanciful, portraits of Henry VI, Edward IV, Warwick, Clarence and Gloucester. With the exception of 'Eugene Aram,' the other novels are spoiled for us by super-sentimentality and affectation, e.g., 'Pelham.' Bulwer Lytton's rich vocabulary and versatile industry secure for him a literary position which even his personal character cannot obliterate.

Just before the war two books appeared which were smothered in the hurry and horror of the time. One was the story of Rosina Lady Lytton, edited by S. M. Ellis, and the other was Lord Lytton's Life of his grandfather. Mr. Gosse reverts to the subject, which we briefly alluded to some weeks ago, calling forth the extraordinary letter published last week from Mr. Frost, Vicar Choral of St. Paul's. The following facts are, we fear, but too clearly established against Bulwer Lytton. (1) He did not seduce his neighbour's wife, but his own, before marriage. (2) After marriage he violently assaulted his wife, either by kicking or biting. Mr. Frost pleads that the bite was probably only a little one. (3) His only daughter, a girl of 20, died of some fever in a Brompton lodging house, with no relative near her. (4) He kidnapped his separated wife by stratagem and force, and had her placed in a private asylum, from which after three weeks' detention she was released. (5) After he had succeeded to the Lytton property, and when he must have been earning thousands by his novels, he allowed his wife just £400 a year, less income-tax. We leave the Vicar Choral of St. Paul's to make the best of these facts, which are all set forth in the book of S. M. Ellis, and which have not, so far as we know, been contradicted.

Mr. Gosse does rather less than justice, in our judgment, to Disraeli's novels. Disraeli had, as Mr. Gosse points out, three periods: the early or extra-parliamentary period, the ten years before he entered Parliament in 1837; the middle period, the ten years after his election, when he was "on the make," to borrow a modern phrase; and the final period, when, after having been Prime Minister he generously gave the world the fruits of his maturity. The novels of the first period, 'Vivian Grey,' 'The Young Duke,' 'Henrietta Temple,' 'Venetia,' 'Contarini Fleming,' are the productions of a young man of genius, writing from the outside, and are full of animal spirits and audacious paradoxes (mostly untrue), but are tiresome to us by reason of their unreality, affectation, and super-sentimentality. 'Contarini Fleming' is the latest and the best of this period. Besides the novels, there are 'The Runnymede Letters,' written for the daily press, and far better than the 'Letters of Junius' in the line of unscrupulous and flashing invective. The little volume containing 'Popanilla,' 'Ixion in Heaven,' and 'The Infernal Marriage' is not sufficiently known. In the way of fanciful satire it is one

of the best things in the language. The middle period (1840 to 1849) was the meridian of Disraeli's intellectual power, and produced the trilogy 'Coningsby,' 'Sibyl' and 'Tancred,' and 'Lord George Bentinck's Life.' Apart from the social satire and the political philosophy, the stories, or plots, of 'Coningsby' and of 'Sibyl' have always struck us as remarkably good, barring the description of the Lancashire working folk in the latter, which is stilted and absurd. The earlier part of 'Tancred' is in Disraeli's happiest vein of satire, but the part about the Holy Land and the Jews bores us. The third period gave us 'Lothair' and 'Endymion.' As Mr. Gosse notes, "the general" missed the delicate satire of the attack on the Church of Rome; it was too subtle for the critics of the day. Mr. Gosse had apparently no space to deal with 'Endymion,' the last, the most pathetic, and sometimes the wisest and wittiest of the novels, written within a year of the statesman's death. No Prime Minister before Disraeli gave us two novels, and none will do so again, in all probability.

There is luck in the author's trade, as in others. Never was such a lucky book as 'Eminent Victorians' by Mr. Lytton Strachey. Mr. Asquith happened to read it just before he delivered his Romanes Lecture at Oxford, and mentioned it with approval. Whatever people may think of his politics, none dispute Mr. Asquith's taste. He made Mr. Strachey's fortune, as surely as George III turned the tide in favour of Burke by saying that every gentleman should read his pamphlet on the French Revolution. Not that 'Eminent Victorians' did not merit its success, for as someone wisely observed, "there may be merit without elevation, but there is hardly ever elevation without merit." Mr. Strachey's four essays are the best biographies that have appeared since Walter Bagehot ceased to write; but being cynical, and Gibbonian in style and point of view, they aroused a good deal of anger. A note of flippancy is struck in the Introduction, when the author says it may be easier to live a good life than to write one; but the offence is greater when the solemn reputations of such personages as Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon are sapped by the solemn sneer of this twentieth century stripling. We agree with most people in thinking the essay on Dr. Arnold unworthy of the other three, not because it is irreverent or ironical, but because it misses its mark and is dull. Idealists and pietists simply refuse to believe in the brandy bottle of Gordon; and we think it probable—the point can't be decided without much evidence not producible at present—that Mr. Strachey is unjust to Sir Evelyn Baring in representing him as leaving Egypt and Gordon to his fate without a twinge. The Barings are a cold-blooded race; but we acquit the first Lord Cromer of deliberately escaping to London from "a madman at the end of a wire." Mr. Gosse is more than just, if Mr. Strachey is less so; for we can't share the enthusiastic admiration of Lord Cromer as a critic and essayist in the columns of a contemporary. On the contrary, we thought the articles signed "C." quite commonplace, and grieved to see a great man of action sinking to the level of a twaddling hack. But Mr. Strachey's finest stroke has escaped Mr. Gosse: for who that has read it can forget the description of Gladstone's stiffening rage as he received the news of Gordon's refusal to leave Khartoum? Mr. Gosse's essays on Sterne and the two Wartons are pure *belles lettres*, but of the best brand, though nobody shall ever persuade us that 'Tristram Shandy' is witty, or humorous, or pathetic, or anything but the most unreadable book in the language.

PERILS BY STRIKES.

Democracy. By Shaw Desmond. Sidgwick and Jackson. 6s. net.

THE topical character of this novel will doubtless attract many readers, and they will be agreeably relieved to find that throughout the book no section of the Police or the Army fails to obey orders or goes on strike. The scene opens with a meeting of the

Middle Classes, gathered together to combat the Red Peril by forming an anti-Socialist Federation. Denis Destin, who has democratic sympathies, is forcibly ejected from the meeting for remarks that are considered blasphemous. He loses home and employment, but, thanks to an introduction to an editor from a democratic duchess, he is able to earn a precarious livelihood by occasional journalism. Meanwhile he is establishing a position in the labour world by a ceaseless flow of speeches in favour of Direct Action. He gradually becomes the right-hand man of Creegan, the true hero of the story, who is the leader of the Direct Actionists. Creegan favours the strike and the barricade, instead of the ineffectual methods of political action. His view is that Capital, by controlling the police and the army, has the big stick with which in any dispute it can bludgeon Labour. Therefore force must be met by force, and not by talk in Parliament and arbitration meetings. A disastrous sectional strike and the distress following a great war persuade him of the necessity of organising a general strike. After many vicissitudes and internal difficulties and disruptions in labour politics, the general strike is at last arranged, and society is taken most uncomfortably by surprise. Destin is alarmed lest it prove impossible to carry the strike through peacefully. He sees that if there is any conflict with troops the strike will go down in helpless murder. But Creegan is fanatically fixed on a fight. Creegan, besides being a visionary, is also an autocrat. Convinced of the victorious might of Democracy as championed by himself, and heeding neither dissuasion nor desertion, he goes forward recklessly to his inevitable end.

The catastrophe comes when the Government is sending a convoy of food under escort through London. Creegan attempts to rush the troops with his motley band of Invincibles. Many of his misguided followers are killed or wounded, and he himself is shot through the chest. An attempt by his friends to get him away into safety fails because a disillusioned and infuriated crowd seize him and crucify him.

The story as a whole would have been more powerful if it had been more compressed. To take a single instance—right in the midst of the events of the general strike, when the story should move swiftly, the action is interrupted by a chapter dealing with the trial of the leader of the Craft-Platonist Socialists on a charge of unnatural vice. The trial is attended by Destin and his betrothed (who always had a fine contempt for the conventions), and the prisoner is sentenced to be "confined for twenty years"! There are also long florid disquisitions throughout the book which merely irritate the reader by distracting his attention from the development of the story. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, Creegan stands out as a powerful and well-drawn character and gives the story some of the elements of tragedy.

ENGLAND'S DEBT TO THE QUAKERS.

The Second Period of Quakerism. By William C. Braithwaite. Introduction by Rufus M. Jones. Macmillan. 15s. net.

THE tree of freedom grows slowly. The very conception of freedom enlarges as the thoughts of men are widened, and the actions of men are ever struggling to overtake it. The majority at any one time, blind to the future ideal, remains fairly satisfied with the freedom already attained, regarding it as a natural inheritance. Some, better instructed, accord thanks and praise to the protestants and fighters of the past, but join the majority in condemning those who by word or deed cast doubt on the present fitness of things, and in suppressing all disturbers of their comfortable peace. None the less, it is in his eternal struggle that man's glory lies; the honours are with the prophets and martyrs, not with the "damned compact majority." The boast of such liberty of thought, of expression, or of action as we in Britain now possess should be reserved for those who are prepared to suffer in the same cause. Little enough did the nation as a whole do to earn it. It is well that such a book as Mr.

Braithwaite's, moderate in expression and judicial in tone, should remind us of the early sufferings of the Quakers. The world at large has a vague idea that Quakers were plain in dress, plain in speech, and plain in dealing, proving abundantly in business that honesty is the best policy, and always preferring peace to contention. It may surprise that world to read how this inoffensive body of Friends was persecuted by a nation just restored from Puritan rigour to contentment in its cakes and ale. If they chose to meet in silence, or even to quake, or groan, or melt into tears as one or another bore witness to the power of the Spirit, what harm was done? But when in face of the proclamation of 1661 they persisted in assembling, they were imprisoned to the number of 4,230 within a few weeks. After the Quaker Act of 1662, we read of seven score crowded into Newgate during the hot summer: "in the night we all lodged in one room"; between the central oaken pillar and the wall "we fastened our hammocks, quite round the room, and in three degrees one over the other . . . and under the lower rank were laid beds upon the floor, in which the sick and such weak persons as could not get into the hammocks lay." During the long cold winter of 1664/5 the leader, George Fox, lay at Lancaster gaol "in a smoky tower, where the smoke of the other rooms came up and stood as dew upon the walls, where it rained in also upon my bed . . . and my body swelled with the cold." "Abundance of them," wrote Baxter, "died in prison and yet they continued their assemblies still. . . . Yea, many turned Quakers, because the Quakers kept their meetings openly and went to prison for it cheerfully. . . . And the poor deluded souls would sometimes meet only to sit still in silence." But "My masters," said Orlando Bridgeman, charging the Grand Jury, "they may speak to one another, though not with or by auricular sound, but by a cast of the eye, or a motion of the head or foot, &c." In any case this is "not according to the Liturgy of the Church of England." The sentence was banishment, but the sailors refused to go, and instead put the Quakers ashore, who then gave themselves up again and stayed in prison for seven years. Such trials and sentences were many, but few shipmasters would give a passage. One at last, "lying Fudge," master of the *Black Eagle*, anchored in Bugby's Hole, with the aid of soldiers from the Tower (for his sailors would lend no hand), dragged, kicked, punched, and tumbled 37 men and 18 women into his hold. It was the year of the Plague. Half the prisoners died before the ship made the Downs. The crew struck. Fudge was arrested for debt, but under a fresh master the ship managed to reach Plymouth after many months. Leaving there she was snapped up by a Dutch privateer, then driven by storm round Iceland to Bergen, and after two months reached Holland, where the Friends were set at liberty and helped back to England.

Meetings were not the only grievance of the authorities. The Quakers objected to swearing in any form, so they were provided with every opportunity of manifesting their objections, above all being asked to take the Oath of Allegiance. A second refusal exposed them to the penalties of *praemunire*, by which their estates were forfeited. The application of this irrelevant statute was so simple, that it scarcely seemed worth while to drag in the Act of Elizabeth against the Separatists, with its ultimate penalty of death. This indeed was tried, but ways of escape were generally found, and in one case the indictment was quashed by no less a judge than Jeffreys. Not so much was made of the Quaker refusal to pay tithes, since these were easily recoverable by distraint. The clergy, however, often preferred to carry such cases to the higher courts in order to involve their opponents in the heaviest possible expense. From 1696 to 1736 over 1,000 Friends were thus prosecuted, of whom 302 were imprisoned, and nine died in prison. "In ten selected cases £800 had been taken in respect of original demands amounting altogether to £15."

In justice to the national character, it should be remembered that this persecution was mainly political. The most virulent of bishops could have done little had not the minds of the authorities been in constant

tremor. Whether it was Charles in fear of Cromwellians, James in fear of William, or William of James; whether French domination, Papal Supremacy, or Puritan resurgence were the bugbear, there was a prevailing atmosphere of suspicion, in which storms were easily raised; and it is easy to see how the force of the persecuting wind varied with the political barometer. Any meeting—even a silent one—might be the source of conspiracy. Secretly conveyed letters could treat of nothing but plots. Every means of suppression was justified for the safety of the people. Had the people itself shared the views of its governors things might have gone yet harder with the Quakers. But instead of mobbing there was sympathy. Even judges "could wish the law was otherwise," and the average Englishman "would to God they would either conform, or be more wise and not be caught!" (Pepys' Diary).

But, as always, the persecuted body was strengthened by persecution. Never was its unity or its spiritual force greater. With increase of toleration came increase of riches, but slackness in sowing the seed; peace engendered quietism and quietism sank into formalism; the inward testimony gave place to the outward sign. The unity formerly maintained by itinerant preachers was now a matter of organisation, and discipline checked vitality. It was recognised that the young might be "traditional Quakers" devoid of independent conviction, but the attempt to call for this before they were admitted to membership proved as futile as similar forms in other religious bodies. Pressure induces contraction, and, as Mr. Braithwaite finely puts it, "the walls and windows of their Church began to shut them out from the wider world and the full sunshine. Naturally, too, the precision of tenets and practices resulted in controversies and dissensions. Painful though some of these were, they were signs of life, bearing witness to an earnest spirit. The problem for the Quakers, as for all Churches, was to adapt to the necessities of human society that Kingdom of Christ which, as Bishop Lightfoot wrote, is "free, comprehensive, universal . . . has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries . . . and above all has no sacerdotal system." Their history, so far as Mr. Braithwaite carries it, shows a gradual declination from that ideal. That they ever showed its possibility may some day seem to be the greatest service they have rendered to mankind.

Although the so-called Toleration Act of 1689 exempted "Their Majesties' Protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws," the Quakers still suffered under some disabilities. Many of these were of their own contriving. Their peculiar application of the precept "Swear not at all" to oaths before a justice hindered them from taking a prominent part in public affairs. Fox, though he could enjoy his pipe and a glass of wine and sent his wife a piece of crimson cloth to line her cloak, did not think it consistent that Quakers should put on the gowns and strange habits of common-councillors and others, or join in aldermanic feasts. In Pennsylvania and in Rhode Island, where they could order such matters in their own way, Quakers could and did take their share in the work of government; but by this sacrifice to what we must regard as form rather than spirit their own country was the loser. Fortunately the paths of social service remained open to them. The Quakers of those days initiated admirable experiments in education; manual training and the study of nature were urged by Penn and others in words that foreshadow the pronouncements of recent Committees; they would make "men, not scholars." We have to thank them too for the increased commercial integrity that has built up our national credit, for the fixing of retail prices as opposed to chaffering, for opposing by their example the truck system of payment, and for setting a high standard in their treatment of work-people. The care of their own poor paved the way for a general system of poor-relief, just as their provision of occupation for prisoners led on to their later labours for the improvement of prisons and the reform of the criminal law. Whether the practical wisdom of the cloth-merchant, John Bellers, had much immediate

effect seems doubtful; he looked far ahead; but his writings have proved an inspiration to such later reformers as Place, Robert Owen, and Bernstein. His proposals for the federation of Europe curiously anticipate in circumstances and method much now brought to fruition (let us hope) in the League of Nations. But more important than any rules or ingenious schemes was his larger—and may we not say his prophetic—vision of a world-wide union of all Christians, which, while permitting diversity of forms, should bind them in common human service. World conditions change, and no elaborate Articles of Peace can foresee or control their inevitable march. One thing only can prevail, not the outward compulsion of armaments, but the inward growth of good-will among men. This was the spark that kindled in the heart of George Fox as from the lonely top of Pendleside he beheld the far-stretching habitations of men. This is the undying flame that has ever guided the Friends. That they have kept it burning for two hundred and fifty years, through suffering and imprisonment not yet ended, is a sign that the human heart is capable of being inspired to a true and perpetual peace.

THE RETURN OF A PRODIGAL.

Poor Relations. By Compton Mackenzie. Martin Secker. Price 7s. 6d. net.

IT would be interesting to analyse the causes that lead a man from success to degeneracy. Frequently, for instance, we find men who, when they have attained to a position of some distinction, degenerate into commonplace drunkards. So, in a manner, it has been with more than one of our present-day novelists. There has been a degeneration, not of their lives, but of their literature. The reason for this is hard to understand. We could well imagine a nonentity taking to drink in very despair of ever making a name for himself otherwise; or a novelist, having failed to attract attention by soothing the public, attempting to do so by shocking them. For those who cannot achieve notability there is always, of course, the alternative of notoriety. For fame to breed this sort of thing, however, is sad. But whether it be from conceit, or contempt of the public (which is really the same thing) or from a desire to keep the pot boiling, or even—which we beg leave to doubt—from sincerity, that it is true in several instances is obvious. Mr. Compton Mackenzie provides a glaring example, and there are others.

There is Mr. Wells whom, with Mr. Polly and Kipps and much else that is delightful in his earlier work still fresh in our memory, it is sad to see now, floundering out of his depth in the troubled waters of theology, and wrestling with the Soul of a Bishop whose heresies would seem to ensure him a position of prominence in the Undying Fire. Then, on a lower plane, there is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who has given up tracking criminals for wandering in a maze of byways in search of lost spirits. We only wish he could re-discover his own. Mr. Arnold Bennett, too, gave signs of the same tendency to degenerate in 'The Pretty Lady,' but he has since returned to the path of rectitude.

We may mention in passing, the lapse, in the dramatic world, of Sir James Barrie, who, though he has since brilliantly recovered himself, committed, some years ago in 'Rosie Rapture,' an indiscretion that would have been suicide in a less firmly established favourite. As things were, it passed, and left Sir James Barrie much where he was before, having gained nothing and lost nothing by his flight. We could give other instances, but we are now concerned primarily with Mr. Mackenzie, and we have particularised enough already to justify our generalisation.

Mr. Mackenzie's thirst for realism led him eventually into quite unnecessary unpleasantness, just as many another man's thirst for money has led him in the end to no better place than the public-house. Mr. Mackenzie became intoxicated with realism. Though

'Sinister Street' cast shadows of vulgarity to come, with 'Carnival' and especially with 'Guy and Pauline' he was marching along the high road to success. But then he slipped suddenly into the gutter, and finding himself there, proceeded to roll himself in its mire. He seems indeed in 'Sylvia Scarlett' and 'Sylvia and Michael' as though he is being unpleasant for the very joy of the thing. He had built for us before beautiful fairy castles of shining sand; of late he has occupied his time in making mud pies.

Thus it was with some trepidation that we opened 'Poor Relations.' Our delight was therefore doubly great on finding no taint of the Scarlett novels marring its pages. Quite early in the book the principal character remarks: "This passion for realism is everywhere Thank goodness, I've been through it and got over it and put it behind me for ever." Let us pray that he is speaking with the voice of his creator, determined once and for all to drop his hyper-realism.

John Touchwood is a "successful romantic playwright and unsuccessful realistic novelist" whose wealth of gold and good humour makes him the long-suffering supporter of his poor relations. On board the *Murmania* bound from New York to Liverpool he makes the acquaintance of a Miss Doris Hamilton, whom he overheard remarking, "I've never been a poor relation yet, and I don't intend to start now." This statement rather upset the complacent content with which he allowed himself to be sponged upon by every one of his relatives, deserving and undeserving; and very few came under the former heading. He none the less allowed his new country house in Hampshire to be usurped by the respective families of a clergyman who had lost his faith and taken to Biblical drama, a cynical literary critic, the widow of an explorer whose exasperating offspring inherited his father's partiality to beetles, a forger, and a backer of second favourites who was incurably afflicted with laziness; not to mention an effete mother described as "simmering in the lamplight" over her game of patience. John takes to himself Miss Hamilton as a private secretary, and gradually finds himself more and more irritated by his relations. But his good-nature is always stronger than his egotism, and he can really manage these people better than he likes to think. The climax, however, is reached when they start to slander him, as it were, with one hand, while they hold the other open to receive the benefits of his generosity. Matrimony proves the solution of the problem, and he elopes to America with the Miss Hamilton that was, leaving behind him a masterpiece in the shape of a letter in which he bequeaths to his unworthy dependents his country house, to be divided into five equal portions among them. In this inherited Babel we leave them. There is a just reward.

Mr. Mackenzie's greatest asset is his vividness. We can picture every line of the narrative, hear every word of the conversation. Without this vividness such a tale would necessarily be a failure, and even as it is there is a faint suspicion of dragging about halfway through. The book is described in the dedication as a "theme in C major." This indeed it is, running along with all the ease of a light musical composition of no complexity. But because it is light we must not think it to be of no consequence, a sort of humorous by-product of the author's brain. Besides, ease it has elegance; it is rich comedy from end to end, well-conceived and brilliantly executed. The humour is not spoilt by lack of polish; indeed, if we started to quote it would be difficult to know what to exclude. The description of the activities of the explorer's son with an air-gun on page thirty-three will live for long in our memory.

As we read this book we become conscious, once again of the delightful fragrance that pervaded the water meadows around Pusher's Mead. Let us hope that the prodigal has returned for good. If he has, it is well worth killing the fatted calf in his honour, even in these rumorous days of "enlightened" democratic government.

DECORATION IN THE THEATRE.

Painter and Decorator. The Monthly Chapbook. No. 2, Vol. 1. August, 1919. Poetry Bookshop.

ONCE in three years, those of us who are the fleeting possessors of leasehold tenements in London, summon into our counsels a gentleman who describes himself as a painter and decorator. Our principal anxiety is to persuade him, in view of the shortness of our purse, that one coat of second class paint is all that is required, one coat and one colour. But he alas! out-Josephs Joseph. He demands not merely one but several coats of many colours. We succumb, believing in our hearts that it doesn't matter in the least what colour he puts on, provided that he and his men make their stay as short as possible, and the bill shorter still. But the painter and decorator ought to despise us even more than he does. He ought to say to us, "How can I paint and decorate this ridiculous mixture of intoxicated Gothic and bastard Romanesque surmounted by two minarets? You ought to have let me in at the beginning. I'm part of the building!"

But all of this is exactly parallel, as Mr. Rutherston points out, to what happens in the theatre, except that the painter and decorator is not called in once in three years, but once in three hundred. The manager chooses his play, his actors, his theatre, his press-agent and his eccentricity. He proceeds to rehearsals, and each of the chosen factors is modified and developed. The play may change from a three-act farce to a problem-play without divisions; players may quarrel themselves into the fourth dimension; the theatre may be captured by an American film syndicate, and the manager may discard rudeness for snuff. But at the very end of it all, unless the play happens to be spectacular in essence he remembers the *decor*. At this point, as Mr. Rutherston indicates, he divides this essentially unified piece of art into at least two parts. Costumes he leaves to the taste of five or six milliners and dressmakers, and scenery he has (if possible) painted by machinery in the Midlands. The lighting is left to experts, who as manipulators of anti-aircraft searchlights would be peerless, but who are a little over-strenuous for a mere play. What they require is a battlefield on a dark night.

Mr. Rutherston objects to this; he objects to it for 27 pages and with a passion that must seem to the box-office manager crazy. He suggests that the whole business of decoration—scenery, lighting, costumes, furniture—is one, and he insists that it is an integral part of the play. A good dress, by which is meant the dress which interprets the atmosphere of the play, is as convincing as a good epigram. Or rather it is a good epigram, for it says abruptly and with emphasis something that very much needed saying. The true scenery is a sort of frozen Russian dance! It expresses emotion and beauty in one. At least that is the sort of thing Mr. Rutherston is saying. And as Mr. Rutherston has not merely said it, but has had the audacity in 'The Winter's Tale' and 'Androcles and the Lion,' to put his views into action, they merit serious consideration.

Nor must we be deterred by the fact that Mr. Rutherston tends to forget the author of the play, and to appear to think that given the right decoration, the play doesn't really matter. This is merely a case of a god saying in his heart there is no fool, or to put it in another way, Mr. Rutherston cannot conceive himself decorating except for an author who deserves decoration. He takes his author for granted. We need not quarrel with him because he concentrates on the painter's side of the business, if we remember that hitherto that has generally been the outside.

What then is the answer to Mr. Rutherston's claim that there should be a director of decoration at every important theatre who should be an essential part of the producing machine from the outset? There are, we imagine, two answers. First that he is not wanted, and alternatively that he already exists. Let us take the first plea first. It is true that the majority of our plays do not require a decorator so much as an executioner. But there are plays, both comedies and tragedies—equally serious works of art—that deserve

the best presentation that can be found for them. We must remember that a play is make-believe, and what is called getting across the footlights is really getting rid of them. The footlights announce the division between life and the play. The author's business is to confound them. For this purpose, as Mr. Rutherston points out, one requires atmosphere. But atmosphere is a subtle thing, not to be caught by the introduction of a live camel or even of an aeroplane. It is the last illusion which guards the doors of art. Is it not reasonable that the painter whose life is bound up in this illusion, should be called in to create it for the theatre?

At this point we are brought up against the second answer, which is that all the time, without our knowing it, this doctrine has been accepted. "Look," we are invited "at His Majesty's." Well, why not? After all, one must look somewhere. For some three years "Chu Chin Chow" has shown that the whole world loves a spectacle. We doubt, however, if Mr. Rutherston, who, in spite of some difficulty with his prepositions, expresses clearly what he means, would be satisfied with "Chu Chin Chow." We have alluded to camels, but that is only half the battle. There are a live donkey, palm trees, oriental fruits and a good deal of incense. Atmosphere! Why, the whole theatre is a grove of joss-sticks! But Mr. Rutherston asks what is interpreted by this remarkable assemblage of costumes and creations? Is the East really to be caught by a camel, or does the camel find it is as hard as ever to get through the needle-eye of art?

We believe that Mr. Rutherston would think so. He would prefer the conception of Mr. Yeats as expressed in 'The Cutting of an Agate.' He would not have his play on a carpet unrolled by the wayside, but he would have the picture of it unrolled, as simply as a carpet, out of the movement of the play. And if we are asked to explain what Mr. Rutherston means by this, we can only point to the second plate which illustrates his essay. It is called "Dress Design for Madame Anna Pavlova in 'Le Réveil de Flore.'" Madame Pavlova could dance like the awakening of a flower, but Mr. Rutherston could draw the mood of the flower, and has in fact done so. If Madame Pavlova had bought out a florist's shop or rifled a garden, her flowers would have died. She assumed instead Mr. Rutherston's picture of a flower and they lived. We suggest that other things than flowers would live if they were approached in this spirit. We hope that it will not be long before Mr. Rutherston proves this in the production of another play.

HOLY ALLIANCE TO LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Problems of Peace. By Guglielmo Ferrero. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 7s. 6d. net.

THE crude propaganda of wartime is already giving way to attempts to put the war into perspective with the development of European society during the last hundred and fifty years. The uneasy transition from propaganda to history is illustrated by the present volume, which—apart from the merits of the particular historical interpretation adopted—is history up to 1850, after which date it relapses into propaganda. The author's thesis is that from before the French Revolution to the present day Europe has been "convulsed" by the dispute as to what authority it is to obey—dynastic or popular? The conflict was complicated by "the fight between the principle of liberty and the principle of authority." The Holy Alliance united the dynastic and the authoritarian principles, but was broken by the Revolution of 1848. The union of the dynastic and authoritarian principles survived by making concessions, in the case of Italy and Germany, to Nationalism and Liberalism; in the case of Austria, to Liberalism. "Germany decided on the world war in order to save the dynastic principle in Austria which was threatened by Nationalism."

It may be doubted whether even those who like this kind of interpretation will feel very satisfied with this particular one. France, for example, was as much an authoritarian State as Germany; and it was the hos-

tility between Germany and Russia, the two greatest dynastic States in Europe, which precipitated the War. If Signor Ferrero's explanation of the nature of the conflict were correct, Germany, Russia, Austria and Serbia, should in 1914 have been fighting on the same side; and then it is not quite clear whom they should have fought. Sufficient has been said to indicate the inadequacy of this method of generalizing forms of government and elevating them into "principles" which serve as the motives of human action.

But the inadequacy of this main idea does not prevent the book from succeeding as an essay in historical psychology covering the period *circa* 1780 to 1850. That in this sphere of historical writing very little has hitherto been attempted increases its value. The author's methods of exposition are clear, and his style, though tending at times towards somewhat complicated metaphor, is extraordinarily vivid. An Italian writing for an American public with whose ways of thought he is conversant, he reviews European history from the end of the 18th century to the present day; and he focusses an intense light on some rather obscure aspects of the earlier portion of this period. His explanation of the breakdown of the 18th century governments before the French Revolution is the most illuminating we have read. "By the 18th century, the dispersion of authority, the scrupulous respects for vested rights and for tradition characteristic of the old regime, became specially obnoxious to the courts engaged in these wars and conflicts, when they found that they were thereby weakened and embarrassed. The élite of the 18th century longed, in a word, for governments stronger, more alert, and more intelligent than those by which Europe was then ruled, even if they should possess fewer antique parchment credentials, if only they were ready to provide capacity and energy in the place of the legitimacy which seemed to have no life left in it." The French Revolution became not only the terror, but also the model of all Europe, and one of its innovations, conscription, was made a part of the general European system. The reduction by Napoleon of the sovereign powers of the Germanic Confederation from fifteen hundred to about forty is only one illustration of the manner in which the discarding of antiquated and inefficient elements in government was accomplished. Having by virtue of this process of modernization overcome the Revolution, the governments of Europe formed the Holy Alliance, the first definite essay at a League of European States attempted by the monarchies, in order to maintain peace throughout the Continent. The author proceeds to describe how the system of which the Alliance was the cornerstone was broken by the Revolution of 1848. The outbreak was inspired by varying motives in Italy, France, Austria, and the Germanic Confederation, and may in general be described as the combined outburst of national feeling and of the political aspirations of the *bourgeoisie* and the lower classes—both of which had been neglected in 1816—aggravated by the "evils common to industry on the grand scale." Dealing specifically with all countries in the first days of the development of the Revolution in Paris, the author remarks that Lenin has done what the leaders of the proletariat at that time failed to do: i.e., to overthrow forcibly the first legal authority established by the Revolution, the purpose of which was to give the new regime the sanction of legality and the character of legitimate government. The results of 1848 took time to work themselves out in the gradual liberation of Italy, the admittance of Hungary to share the Austrian hegemony and the consolidation of the Germanic Confederation under the leadership of Prussia. In regard to the last-named, the author does not forget to note that the question of Schleswig-Hol-

stein was raised by the Diet of the North German Confederation at Frankfort in 1843. Similarly, it may be remarked, 1848 set in motion the extension of political power among the masses of the nations which is only reaching its limit to-day.

So far Signor Ferrero's history is excellent, but the latter section of his book succumbs to the temptation to be merely Italian and anti-German propaganda. It is, however, relieved by occasional valuable generalizations, as when he says:—"While in all other European nations trade, industry, finance, education, the Press, and Diplomacy fulfilled each its proper function without reference to the rest, the German Government spared no pains to gather up all these separate activities and unite them in a single concerted activity whose object was to serve the ambition and increase the power of Germany." So again he remarks that modern States have done what no previous governments in history have dared to do, namely to arm the masses; and he speaks of "the usual insane violence" of the St. Petersburg Government in Poland. His characterization of the policy uniformly pursued by this country is that it is "precise but petty." This is partly true, and partly untrue; and the criticism could be applied with just as much and as little meaning to Italy's bargaining with Germany and Austria during 1914 and 1915.

Finally, as the only means of restraining the violent forces tending to disintegrate civilization, the author advocates a League of Nations, based on three "principles": first, that the States constituting the League should recognize only legally constituted governments; secondly, that they should respect nationality; thirdly, that they should reduce armaments and admit reciprocal inspection. The vagueness of these "principles," and the obvious difficulties which would arise in the attempt to base on them a League of Nations, are not removed by the author's interesting explanation of what they mean.

THE BAR SINISTER.

Deadham Hard. By Lucas Malet. Methuen. 7s. net.

THE literary achievement of the gifted lady who for nearly four decades has been known as Lucas Malet, has passed through many phases and developments, and we have some difficulty in deciding with which of these 'Deadham Hard' shows most affinity. Its central theme in some measure recalls 'The Wages of Sin,' but the moral, if moral there be, is of a very different kind. The mystic element which provided a basis for that wonderful essay in the supernatural, 'The Gateless Barrier,' makes here only a casual appearance, with no bearing seemingly on the story. There is little of the tragedy, and emphatically nothing of the poignant human sympathy which placed 'Sir Richard Calmady' in a class by itself. Even the propagandist zeal of the recent convert seems temporarily in abeyance, since no actual "reconciliation" with the Roman Church is recorded in these pages.

The book opens with vivid promise, and up to a certain point our interest is well maintained. But for the last half of the time we are uncomfortably conscious of something like a slackening in grip. At an early stage in the action, Damaris Verity, the heroine, a nice girl though a trifle addicted to snobbishness, unexpectedly discovers the existence of an illegitimate half-brother in a lower social walk than her own, and generously determines to play a sister's part in his life. With this resolution and the ensuing explanation with her father, the plot attains its climax, and nothing of real interest afterwards occurs. Two subordinate characters, ap-

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parently intended to have some importance, disappear about this point from the scene. One, a cousin and potential lover of Damaris, is in no way remarkable. But the other is a cruelly lifelike study of that type of instructress to whom "good families" frequently committed, and perhaps still commit, the care of their children, ignoring the total absence of every qualification required for such an office, and rising to sublime heights of virtuous indignation when, at long last, it was forced upon their notice. The wretched creature's vulgarity, her illiteracy, her hopeless all-round inefficiency, her preposterous ambitions, her lack of any principle or even decent feeling, are gibbeted with a spiteful minuteness which comes strangely indeed from Kingsley's daughter. Sir Charles Verity, the father of Damaris, is described as a man of remarkably strong character and brilliant abilities. But we have to take these things mainly on trust, and his recorded conversation does not much impress us. His death, too, immediately after obtaining a splendid "proconsular" appointment, seems to us in the nature of an anticlimax; as does the marriage of Damaris with an amiable but scarcely alluring veteran three times her age. As might be inferred from what was mentioned above, Sir Charles is the possessor of a past in which more than two, or even three, women have figured. A good deal, perhaps more than enough, is said about the temperament of which all this was the outcome. We prefer this psychological analysis to the author's reiterated insistence on the purity of his eighteen-year old daughter. In fiction as in life, it seems better taste to take some things for granted.

A LITTLE OF EVERYTHING.

Many There Be. By O. A. Sherrard. Sidgwick and Jackson. 7s. net.

MR. SHERRARD has an amiable objection to leaving his characters unmated, and this novel records, in consequence, an unusually high proportion of marriages, some of them, we fear, eminently unsuitable. When we add the restoration of two long-lost relatives, a Hebrew villain of deepest dye, several comic men and women, at least one murder, and unlimited reflections on life, education, philanthropy, literature, socialism, and other topics, it will be plain that the author has been generous in his desire to provide a variety entertainment for his readers. But the cumulative result is seldom entertaining, and produces for the most part an impression of monotony.

A PUGILIST MANQUE.

Against the Grain. By C. A. Dawson-Scott. Heinemann. 7s. net.

MRS. DAWSON-SCOTT has, we think, a predilection for dealing with what is called the seamy side of life. This she did with great effect in the first novel published by her, which described the tragedy of a woman gently born and bred, and lacking neither intelligence nor principle, but cruelly bested by temperament and circumstance. In her latest work she has elected to adopt a masculine standpoint, and we feel, if such a heresy be permitted in these feminist days, that she is, as a result, less convincing. She has, at any rate, to this extent failed; that though we often pity and sometimes admire her hero, we do not greatly like him. He is born with a vocation for pugilism, but the prejudices of a respectable lower middle-class home oblige him to decline upon engineering. An extremely unpleasant adventure leading him, though without solid reason, to believe that his days are numbered, he offers himself as a volunteer for the Boer War, and in that capacity suffers and accomplishes many things. Returning to civil life with improved health and prospects, he tries his luck in various enterprises, and for a time does well in each, but soon fires of the monotony, and is off in some new direction. He is, in fact, the proverbial rolling stone; and this kink in his nature seems destined to hinder him from achieving success either in matters financial or sentimental, despite the many fine qualities he undoubtedly possesses. The story is as far as possible from ending on

a full stop, and leaves us with no indication of what the future may be supposed to hold for him. His family, though far from attractive, are on the whole well drawn and there are some slight but vivid sketches of women.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE

FOLK-LORE. Vol. XXX. No. 2. Sidgwick and Jackson. 6s. 6d. Apart from the 'Collectanea' and 'Reviews,' there are only two articles in the latest number of 'Folk-Lore.' They are both, however, of exceptional interest. Mrs. A. Murgoci gives a survey of 'Customs connected with Death and Burial among the Roumanians.' They get apparently a great deal of enjoyment out of death rites, as the English used to out of wakes. "Death feasts" have become so much a habit that a word made out of the term for them is used for any kind of giving. In Moldavia such feasts even happen seven years after interment, when the dead are dug up for a final glorification, their bones being washed in wine. This exhumation has been forbidden in towns, but in the country it keeps the priests busy. There is also a great annual feast in honour of the dead in general. The observances with water (from early days a sacred element) are particularly striking, and two charms are given which are supposed to bring rain. Dr. F. W. Bussell is also concerned with Roumania in his able summary of 'The Problem of the Gipsies,' for in this region they are gathered to a large extent than elsewhere, and a static instead of a nomadic population. The puzzle as to the origin of the gipsies is that their language, which is nearer Hindustani than any other tongue, is not in accord with what is known or reasonably supposed, concerning their appearance in Europe. They had an exodus westward after 1400, as pilgrims or strolling players; but it is difficult to credit them with any definite religion or beliefs, or to find traditions which supply trustworthy help as to their origin. The story of the Wandering Jew Dr. Bussell dismisses as a late forgery, a pious fraud, in fact; and a better clue is afforded by the Sigmæ of Herodotus, who are connected with skill in metal-working, a constant feature among gipsies. The name "Egyptians" is valueless as a hint of race or habitat; and so naturally is much evidence proceeding from casual inquirers into a fugitive people, while those who have been either robbed by gipsies, or have secured useful predictions or charms from them, may take on opposite sides exaggerated views of their mind or morality. The whole question remains obscure; and Dr. Bussell's clear and interesting digest of what is known should be a valuable aid to further research. As an expert musician, he might have told us something of gipsy music, which has played a considerable part in the output of modern composers.

MUSIC NOTES

THE DEATH OF ADELINA PATTI.—When the greatest operatic soprano of the 19th Century—not omitting Catalani or Pasta or Jenny Lind from the calculation—retired from public life thirteen years ago, the sense of loss that was to be created by her death last Saturday had in a measure been discounted. A few of us, and only a few, had heard her in her prime, and knew something of the infinite beauty of her voice and her art at their finest. Consequently it is no harder to write to-day that Patti is dead than it was a week ago, when speaking of Melba and Tetrassini, to observe (by a coincidence) "Now that Patti sings no more." But the fact remains that a rare and unique personality has disappeared; a wonderfully gifted woman, who fascinated the people of many countries not only by a voice of extraordinary charm and strangely haunting quality, but by singing the like of which is no longer heard. She owed much also to a personality of singular grace and vivacity, to a marvellous aptitude for the stage and for dramatic expression in every phase. It was Sarah Bernhardt who said "Il n'y a qu'une Patti au monde." It is not alone the loss of the artist but the disappearance of her art that we deplore. Garcia considered her the last great exemplar of the golden age of singing. She has gone out with the era and the vogue of the music that was written for the vocalists of her school—the great Italian school of the 18th and 19th cen-

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turies. The universality of her genius enabled her to win distinction in every phase of lyric art, from Mozart down to Meyerbeer and Verdi. In these she may have successors. In Rossini, or even Bellini and Donizetti, there is not likely to be another Patti.

M. MOISEWITSCH'S RECITAL.—There was nothing sensational about the programme—as little, indeed, as about the pianist himself—to account for the surprising crowd at Queen's Hall when M. Moiseiwitsch gave his first recital of the season, on the first day of the big strike. But there were things that he has not played often or ever before, and his admirers wanted to hear them, quite apart from the inevitable group of Chopin pieces which they look for and love as a matter of course. For instance, Beethoven's great final sonata in C minor—nothing could be more interesting than to compare the Polish artist in this with a player of such wholly different calibre as Mr. Frederic Lamond; to note the many opposite shades of treatment, and wonder that tenderness and grace allied to ineffable charm of touch should seem adequately to replace the Scotchman's wealth of poignant feeling welling up from the profoundest depths of despair. Again, in the lengthy selection from Brahms—liberal enough almost to suggest a pre-war scheme—it was quite remarkable how M. Moiseiwitsch contrives, by dint of forceful accentuation and strong rhythmical energy, to bring out the true qualities of the Intermezzi and even of the Rhapsody in E flat, and so satisfy the critical sense of the listener accustomed to greater ruggedness and a more masculine treatment in the rendering of Brahms. But it was the tenderness again, as well as the intellectuality of the artist, that helped to accomplish the unexpected here. The well-known Toccata of Schumann, always such a favourite at the "Pops" in the old days (especially when Mme. Schumann played it) was another item that we had not previously heard from these deft youthful fingers; and through them now the ceaseless patter of the semiquavers sounded clear and true as the stroke of a mechanical hammer. Yet with the *rubato*, the *crescendos*, and the *diminuendos* that only the human touch can achieve.

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INSURANCE

The present industrial unrest has given rise to many enquiries for insurance to meet the special contingencies of the moment, and in the field of riot and civil commotion a big business has been transacted. Whenever such disputes tend to arouse the passions, it is difficult to foretell what damage may result to property: where disputes are extended to the point of starvation, it is certain that there must be looting and other excesses. If the movement assumed the more serious aspect of an organised attack by force on existing institutions, then it is certain that property, if not life itself, would be endangered. For these reasons insurance is certain to receive attention. But there are other and really more important aspects of the matter. In the first place, it has been suggested that the principles of insurance may be of some assistance in preventing industrial disputes. It is interesting to recall a speech made a few months ago by Mr. Cuthbert Heath, than whom there is no higher authority on most branches of insurance. Speaking at the annual meeting of the Excess Insurance Co. he said: "My own personal feeling is that insurance is going to become more and more the solution of many of our difficulties . . . I am not at all sure that insurance will not in time be able to help him (a manufacturer) in providing against his industrial risks—I mean, his labour difficulties. I can imagine a time when the workman or his union will be able to ensure that his earnings for a particular job shall not be interfered with, either by physical hazards or by his employer breaking faith with him. I can imagine the employer being insured against his schemes being interfered with by the same physical risks, and also by the bad faith of the workman or his union. In other words, insurance can become the stakeholder in the buffer state between two parties, who, for the moment at all events, do not seem to have much faith in each other." The aim is so desirable and the industrial times seem so much out of joint, that it is to be hoped that Mr. Heath will devote himself to this scheme and produce some workable proposals without delay.

Re-insurance has been so prominently before the public lately, by reason of the flotation of several new companies, that it may be desirable to indicate the place of this branch in the complicated sphere of insurance. It affects every department of insurance in varying degrees, but for the sake of simplicity a case in the fire department may be considered. A manufacturer desires to insure his premises for half a million sterling, and he has the alternative of insuring the whole sum in one office, or of accepting a large number of policies for small amounts from several offices. It is obviously an advantage to him to adopt the first course if he is satisfied of the financial stability of any one office. But that office which is ready to issue a policy for half a million sterling would never dream of running such a great liability itself, and in fact it does what the manufacturer himself might have done, it induces many other offices to share in the risk. So far as the manufacturer is concerned, he has as a security for his policy not merely the resources of the office which issues a policy to him, but indirectly also the resources of the re-insurance companies, which are sharing the direct company's liability. The re-insurance companies must of course be sound or the direct company would be paying away premiums and obtaining a doubtful guarantee in return.

The creation of such companies here is very desirable, and they have met with an overwhelming welcome from the investing public. One of the advantages of the re-insurance companies being British is, that it will be much easier for the public to investigate the financial position of those companies on which the big direct companies rely to undertake the surplus over the amounts they retain for their own account.

THE CITY

Once again the financial community has to acknowledge indebtedness to the war emergency regulations of the Stock Exchange. Every business man hates restrictions; but the railway strike would have caused demoralisation in the stock markets on Monday last had there been an open speculative account. Dealers were very nervous for a time, and some wild rumours were circulated, probably by persons who saw a prospect of purchasing cheap stock. Had markets been free to "bear" operators, a slump would have been inevitable. As it was, prices were marked down in anticipation of liquidation, which did not take place to any material extent, and the Stock Exchange, instead of giving way to panic, was able to display calmness which developed into increasing confidence.

Naturally, a sharp reaction has occurred in shares which had been exceptionally buoyant in recent weeks. In oil shares and in a few mining and miscellaneous securities the decline might almost be described as healthy. It was time that a check was put upon the rise in shares whose quotations already discounted the future for months, perhaps years, ahead; but it must be admitted that the undertone of markets looked very firm, and a general recovery was foreshadowed as soon as the strike should collapse.

The first half of the fiscal year is now complete, and the revenue for the period amounted to £458,998,799, an increase of £115,578,142 above the figures of the corresponding half of 1918-19. The estimated increase for the whole year was roughly £312,000,000, including £200,000,000 to be derived from the sale of surplus assets. The proceeds of these sales should come under the heading of "miscellaneous," but the miscellaneous revenue for the half-year amounts to only £44,763,355. It is suspected therefore that the large sums understood to have been realised by the sale of war stores have gone to appropriations in aid of departmental votes. If this be so, the return of public revenue and expenditure does not make a full disclosure of the financial position, and the six months' expenditure which was stated at £740,343,700 (comparing with £1,356,342,055 for the corresponding half of the previous year) is not the complete total.

Meanwhile some industrial companies continue to display enviable confidence in their financial arrangements. The Rover Company of Coventry proposes to increase its capital by £200,000 to £700,000 and to make the shareholders a present of £350,000 of new shares, thus doubling the capital without adding a penny to its cash. On the other hand, the Vauxhall Motors directors, in view of the industrial outlook, deem it inadvisable to pay the usual interim dividend.



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MOUNT AUSTIN (JOHORE) RUBBER ESTATES.

THE NINTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Mount Austin (Johore) Rubber Estates, Limited, was held at the Council Room of the Rubber Growers' Association, 38, Eastcheap, E.C., yesterday, Sir Ernest W. Birch, K.C.M.G., presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. Gunter, F.C.I.S.) having read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors,

The Chairman said: The capital of the company remains as it was in the last report, namely, £600,000, in shares of £1 each. If you look at the accounts, the item of sundry creditors stands at £31,387; this includes the Eastern agents' and manager's commission and bonus to estate staff. The income-tax reserve account has been increased by £11,000, now standing at £31,457. During the year nearly £10,000 has been spent on buildings, furniture, implements, live stock, etc., and £5,600 on plant and machinery. Sundry debtors, £64,666, is mainly for rubber sold, the payment for which had not been received at the close of the financial year. Prepaid items at estate, amounting to £2,410, is in respect of land rent, 1919, for nine months paid in advance, the whole of the 1919 rent having been included in the accounts.

Turning to the profit and loss account, the item of London office expenses is nearly £1,000 less than that shown last year, and there is a satisfactory item of nearly £2,000 for interest received on deposits. Depreciation is £500 more than it was last year. On the credit side of this account it will be found that the method of arriving at the profit on rubber sold is the same as appeared in last year's accounts. It will also be seen from this account that the net profit for the year amounted to £64,464 12s. and, with the balance carried forward from the previous year, after the deductions shown, a sum of £68,314 stands to the credit of profit and loss account. As there is the large sum, which I have mentioned, of £31,457 standing to the credit of income-tax reserve account, the directors propose that the dividend this year should be 10 per cent., free of tax, which is equivalent to 14.3 per cent., less tax. The estimated output of rubber for the previous year was 3,075,000 lbs., but the crop actually harvested was only 2,770,612 lbs., or, approximately, 304,000 lbs. short of the estimate.

Mr. Anker, notwithstanding the exorbitant cost of materials, succeeded in producing the crop at 42.64 cents, or 11.93d.—or just under 1s.—per lb., f.o.b., compared with his estimate of 43.43 cents, or 1s. 0.16d. per lb.

Mr. J. Madsen Mygdal seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the above company was held at River Plate House, Finsbury Circus, London, E.C., on Thursday, considering a resolution for the reconstitution of the capital of the company. The Hon. Sir Arthur Lawley, G.C.S.I. (the chairman of the company) presided.

The Chairman, in moving the resolution, said that at the last annual meeting he foreshadowed the introduction of a scheme for the rearrangement of the capital, and by a circular letter convening the meeting they would have seen set out at length the terms of the resolutions which they were asked to adopt. When the Forestal Company was formed, as far as the British public was concerned, it was a new venture, in which the vendor had, however, implicit confidence, and desired to take most of the purchase price in the ordinary shares. The shares offered to the public were, therefore, not only assured a minimum of remuneration, but given an interest in the profits of the company and a share in its future prosperity. That was why the share capital was divided into an equal number of preference and ordinary shares—the preference being entitled to 6 per cent. cumulative interest and 25 per cent. of the surplus profits. In 1912-1913 the acquisition of the Santa Fe Land Company and of the American company was negotiated, at which the preference and the ordinary share capital was increased *pari passu* and the exact proportion of both classes of issued shares was maintained. It was deemed advisable to satisfy a portion of the purchase price payable in cash and to provide the necessary working capital to issue debentures instead of more share capital, because the rate at which money could be borrowed on debenture was then comparatively low. The belief in the prospects of the company was now so firmly established that the ordinary shares were more popular than the preference shares, notwithstanding their priority rights, and it was evident that if the preference shareholders adopted the scheme the market value of their shares would be benefited. In the circumstances a reorganisation of the capital, meaning at the same time a change in the constitution of the company had been considered advisable, and resolutions to that effect were submitted for their approval. There were two main reasons why the board had proposed that the preference shareholders should be asked to give up their particular rights in surplus profits in exchange for an issue of fully paid ordinary shares, and while they proposed to issue new shares to pay off the outstanding debenture debt. It was to simplify the capital account of the company, and to bring the issue share capital more in relation to the book value of the assets. The resolutions were agreed to by both classes of shareholders.

The scheme was adopted.

OILFIELDS FINANCE CORPORATION.

Presiding on Wednesday, October 1st at the meeting of the Oilfields Finance Corporation, Limited, Major R. W. Barnett, M.P., said that on the occasion of the last annual general meeting he had stated—without laying any claim to the gift of prophecy—that he hoped the company would do at least as well during the then current year as in the previous twelve months. This modest prediction had been more than realised. The year's working showed a net profit of £64,019, as against £40,269, an increase of more than 50 per cent. The directors were only recommending a dividend of 20 per cent., as compared with 25 per cent. for the corresponding period, but the proposed capitalisation of reserves would give the shareholders (when the necessary changes in the articles of association had been carried into effect) a very substantial bonus. The balance-sheet showed assets very largely in excess of the issued capital, and it was the policy of the board, while keeping these assets as liquid as was consistent with their profitable employment to restore to the shareholders some part at least of the capital written off in crisis of three years ago. Shareholders would remember that last year the Treasury Committee on New Issues had, for some inscrutable reason, refused to sanction a distribution of 25 per cent. in fully-paid shares by capitalisation of profits carried to reserve. This restriction had now been removed, and the directors were recommending, in addition to the cash dividend of 20 per cent., that the sum of £37,000, part of the amount standing to credit of reserve, should be capitalised and distributed *pro rata* among the shareholders by the allotment of one fully-paid share of 4s. in respect of every two shares now held. This would be a capital distribution of 50 per cent. as against the 25 per cent. proposed and vetoed a year ago. The issued capital of the company after this distribution would be only £111,000. A Winchester shareholder, who had written a most kindly appreciation of the work of the directors during the trying period of the war, asked the old question: Why did not the board publish a list of the company's investments? The answer was, of course, that the Oilfields Finance Corporation was a finance company and not a trust company. It was the function of a trust company to spread its capital over a considerable number of investments. On the other hand, it was the business of a finance company to buy shares and to sell shares, to prepare properties for flotation, to promote companies, to underwrite issues of capital, and to devise and carry into effect schemes of amalgamation. The publication by such a company at regular intervals of a list of its assets would create many erroneous impressions, and far from assisting the individual shareholder to assess the true value of his holding, it would lead him into a maze of speculation and surmise to which in the very nature of the case he would be without a key.

It was, perhaps, a truism to say that the future of oilfields finance was closely associated with the future of oil. He was not one of those who believed that the reign of oil would prove perpetual. At the present rate of consumption half a century would exhaust the proved petroleum resources of the world, and, although new oilfields would doubtless be discovered, it was probable that demand would grow at least as rapidly as supply. The distillation in low-temperature retorts of coal and allied minerals would in time do something to augment the supply of fuel oil, but it was necessary to be on their guard against exaggerated hopes of production from this source. An eminent admiral, who had earned the undying gratitude of his fellow-countrymen by concentrating the British Fleet in the North Sea at a critical period of our history, stated in *The Times* a few weeks ago, that "so long as a pound of coal exists there exists, say, half a pound of oil with further research." He (the Chairman) was afraid he must join issue with that statement. At the request of the late Sir Boveron Redwood—whose loss to the oil world they could none of them sufficiently deplore—he had accepted more than two years ago the chairmanship of an important committee, appointed under the auspices of the Institution of Petroleum Technologists, to investigate the production of oil from coal, and he could say with some authority that, apart from the fact that anthracite coal contains no oil whatever, it would take much research to find more than 25 gallons in the average ton of bituminous coal, so that Lord Fisher's "half a pound of oil" would dwindle into something like 1½ oz. Undoubtedly for some years to come the best method of obtaining petroleum would be by drilling for it. The life of King Oil might be comparatively a short life, but it would be at least a merry one. While supplies lasted, and they would probably last out our time, it would be difficult to set limits to the prosperity of the petroleum industry, and in that prosperity he was confident that their company would have its full share.

The report was adopted, and the capitalisation scheme approved.